Oh, That's So Punk Rock!!
Resistance and Collective Identity within the Punk Movement

Submitted by
Andrea Dassopoulos

In Partial Fulfillment for the Master's Degree
In Sociology

Committee:
Dr. Alemseghed Kebede, Chair
Dr. Rhonda Dugan
Dr. Robin Högnäs

CERTIFICATION OF COMPLETION OF ALL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MASTERS OF ARTS IN SOCIOLOGY
THESIS OPTION

This is to certify that Andrea Dassopoulos (Candidate's Name) has successfully completed all requirements for the Master of Arts in Sociology.

Under the direction of the following committee:

1. Alemseghed Kebede — Name of Chair — Signature — July 05, 07 — Date
2. Ronda Dugan — Name of Member — Signature — 7/5/07 — Date
3. Robin Högnäs — Name of Member — Signature — 7/5/07 — Date

Title of Thesis or Academic Area Examinations:

Oh, That's So Punk Rock!! Resistance and Collective Identity Within The Punk Movement

Truncated Title of Thesis:

Oh, That's So Punk Rock!!

Check if thesis is:

- ☐ Style used in professional journals of Major discipline
- ☐ Turabian

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

Acknowledgements.....i

Abstract.....ii

List of Tables and Figures.....iii

Chapter One: Introduction

Background to the Problem..... 1

Statement of the Problem..... 1

Objective..... 4

Importance of the Study..... 4

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Introduction..... 5

Brief History of Punk..... 6

Structure of Punk Life..... 7

Membership..... 10

Collective Identity..... 12

Chapter Three: Research Design and Method

Introduction..... 15

Data Collection..... 16

Sample Selection..... 18

Data Analysis..... 18

Strengths of Method..... 19

Limitations of Method..... 20

Chapter Four: Findings

Introduction..... 22

Frequencies..... 22

Conformity..... 26

The Scene..... 29

Drugs..... 33

Authority..... 35

Class..... 37

Gender..... 39

Race..... 44

Summary..... 46

Chapter Five: Discussion and Conclusion

Conclusions..... 47

Contributions of the Study.....48

Limitations of the Study.....48

Future Study..... 49

Summary..... 49

References..... 51

Appendix A
Tables and Figures.....54

Appendix B
Songs Used in Analysis 61

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my parents and my boyfriend, Don, for their unconditional love and support, the McNair program for funding this research, my friends and cohort for brainstorming with me, and Josh Webb for his knowledge on current trends in hardcore music and for assistance in data collection. This project would not have been possible without Dr. Alem Kebede, my mentor and committee chair, whose passion for sociology is an inspiration and whose knowledge has been a resource for me since first attending California State University, Bakersfield. I would also like to thank committee members Dr. Rhonda Dugan, for being incredibly supportive and extremely hip, and Dr. Robin Högnäs, for questioning everything and challenging me to think, and the rest of the faculty of the sociology department for encouraging my growth and nurturing my intellect. You are all punk rock in your own way. Finally, I would like to thank every kid who saved her lunch money to buy a printing press or instrument or who hitchhiked to another state just to see a band.

ABSTRACT

This research examines the collective identity of the group known as punk. Punk is conceptualized as a resistance movement, one in which members make a personal commitment to ideals and to a lifestyle which contradicts mainstream value systems. Analyzing 678 songs over the thirty year lifespan of punk, I outlined the major belief system of the group and how a collective identity is formed through a dialogue between fans and musicians. Punks are anti-authoritarian, showing a disdain for government, religion, police, corporations, and conformity in all forms. They also display a working-class conscience and support race and gender equality. Self-definition is ongoing and authenticity and adherence to punk ideals is encouraged. The primary messages have not changed in the development of punk, but the relative importance of each issue has fluctuated with changing times. Punk continues to grow and be a viable alternative for youth who are discontented with mainstream cultural forms. Understanding the spirit of punk is limited through content analysis since the other elements of a punk lifestyle may be more significant in forming identity; however, music draws these youths in and keeps them punk. The rebellion of punks helps us understand social and cultural change from the bottom up. Looking at how punks become integrated into the wider social system as adults and how they incorporate their punk identity into their work and whether that work is geared toward social change and social justice would continue this research into the future.

List of Tables and Figures

Frequency Distribution Tables of Themes Found in Punk Lyrics in Sample

Table 1: Authority and Politics.....54

Table 2: Inequality.....54

Table 3: Lifestyle.....54

Table 4: Personal.....54

Table 5: Action.....54

Figure 1: Comparison of Waves.....55

Figure 2: Authority and Politics over Lifespan of Punk 1978-2007.....56

Figure 3: Inequality Themes over Lifespan of Punk 1978-2007.....57

Figure 4: Lifestyle Themes over Lifespan of Punk 1978-2007.....58

Figure 5: Personal Themes over Lifespan of Punk 1978-2007.....59

Figure 6: Action Themes over Lifespan of Punk 1978-2007.....60

Chapter I:
INTRODUCTION

Background to the Problem

Punk has existed for more than thirty years as a youth movement, its precise definition somewhat elusive and constantly changing as old members leave and new arrive. It is a complex subculture, with its own fashion, art, music, literature, businesses, and political ideology. Every major city in the United States has a punk scene that is unique to its area, but punks are mobile, traveling from scene to scene and sharing ideas and music; therefore, punk has some consistent qualities throughout the country.

Punks have become politically active and outspoken critics of contemporary society; different events prompt punks to respond, such as perceived injustices, but often the response is merely to express discontent through music. The scene exists for those who feel disconnected with mainstream cultural forms and provides a haven for expressing themselves and being with others who share their values. The scene is the social space in which the punk actors develop their collective identity. A division of labor exists within a given punk scene; some are writing and publishing their own literature, others creating t-shirts, others distributing information, others creating music, and still others just consuming the goods produced by the culture. All the products of the punk scene serve to unify punks as a group and establish communication between members and between the group and others.

Statement of the Problem

Punk is somewhere between a subculture and a social movement (Haenfler 2004). As a subculture, punk is localized, wherein members influence the scene with their own personal

cultures, creating a distinctive punk scene in every town. The other elements of a city also weep into the local punk scene, such as other forms of music found in the area. Musicians and artists bring their own habitus and cultures into emerging subcultures (O'Connor 2004). The blend of their cultures with the ideals and purposes of the movement creates a new habitus and culture defined as punk, and as members become involved in the scene, they construct an identity within the boundaries of the new culture. This subcultural identity becomes refined into the collective identity of the movement. The collective identity of punk becomes the primary identity of members of the group, and other cultural markers, such as ethnicity or social class become secondary in identity construction.

As a social movement, punk continues to spread and recruit new members, making use of any available means for spreading their message. Despite local flavors within punk scenes, the concept of punk is global, and movement members seek unity. Like a social movement, punk exists outside and challenges the established order. Beyond the comforts of the scene, punks can be found joining other established movements for social change. They tend toward liberal causes, such as animal rights, and many punks are active in the "Food Not Bombs" organization which provides weekly free vegetarian meals in cities throughout the country. However, punks do not mobilize and gather around any single cause or issue.

Eyerman and Jamison (1998) have studied how social movements use music to spread their message and strengthen members' commitments. The punk movement, however, began with music and developed into a broader social and political identity. Without an organized or deliberate effort, a collective identity emerged within punk, simultaneously and in distant locations. There seems to be an understood meaning of "punk"

as implying rebellion or chaos and is often used on mainstream television in reference to a hairstyle or celebrity outfit that is "punky." The implication is always that the outfit is different and challenges our expectations and cultural norms of one should dress.

The common use of the term "punk" implies that there is a stable punk ideology and that non-punks are free to adopt elements of it as they see fit. For non-members to know about these elements, there must be communication between them and punks. My research examines the cultural objects of punk as collective representations of the group. It essentially seeks to understand how punk music expresses the group's identity and how that identity is defined. Punk is an expressive and diffuse movement without a formal agenda or organizational hierarchy. Collective identity becomes crucial to maintaining the boundaries of such an movement (Johnston, Laraña, and Gusfield 1994). Collective identity is always evolving and changing at different moments in the movement's life.

O'Hara (1999), a philosopher and movement member, has outlined the philosophy of punk as being pro-automaton and anti-oppression, based on his personal experiences and letters which were published in "MaximumRockandRoll" magazine, a well-established punk fanzine. He briefly discusses the organization of the culture but focuses exclusively on how punks view political and social issues like racism, sexism, homophobia, and government systems. I elaborate on his theory by examining the values that are espoused in punk music through a content analysis. By examining the changes in the primary messages of the songs, I show how the collective identity of punk has evolved and how punks express their philosophy to each other and to the world.

Objective

I seek to outline the ideals of the punk movement through analysis of music. Music is the primary communicative form that punks have with each other. It is also the way in which local punk scenes are united at a national level because bands are always touring and spreading their messages. The questions I will answer are: What are the core values of punk? How have the values of punk changed or stayed the same since its beginning? What may have influenced the adoption or rejection of these values? What type of change would punks like to see and what do they see their role as being in inciting this change?

Importance of Study

The significance of punk as an avenue for of social change has not been adequately theorized. Punk as deviance and as art has received much more attention than punk as politics. This paper shows how punk music reflects the collective identity of the movement. Much of the literature has focused on the organization and structure of punk communities from an outsider perspective. This paper fills a gap by focusing on the values of the group and allowing members of the group (the bands) to speak on behalf of the group, thereby providing an insider perspective. As a researcher, I also have an insider perspective, having been involved with punk scenes since 1987.

Chapter II:
LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

In this chapter, I will discuss the literature on the punk movement. I will briefly outline the early roots of punk in the United States. I will also explain the structure of the punk scene and the expectations and regular routines of its members. I will then discuss the transformation punks make as they join this group. Finally, I will explain collective identity and its role in the punk movement.

Punks and scholars have offered many different assessments of the movement: punk is disillusionment, dissatisfaction, a mirror reflection of the world's worst horrors, a subculture, a social movement, a personal identity, an attitude, a political stance, and evidence of a postmodern break (Andes 1998; O'Hara 1999; McNeil and McCain 1996; Wojcik 1995, Hebdige 1979). The punk community, at its core, is structured like many youth cultures in that membership and affiliation is based on lifestyle and consumption patterns, rather than by class, ethnicity, and race which characterize adult communities (Pilkington and Johnson 2003). For punks, the consumption centers around music and all that is related to music. Punks meet at concerts, which they call "shows." Shows are the primary gathering points for punks; they exchange information about other shows, sell clothing and merchandise, and generally socialize. Regular attendance at shows is how punks signify their membership to the group. However, the punk movement has benefited from technologies such as the Internet, and groups are using it for networking and affiliating with other punks across distances (Williams 2006). The new media of the internet has

shifted the ways in which punks participate and interact. This use of technology makes participation and engagement with the music at shows less important than the philosophical identification with the principles of the movement. The collective identity of punks becomes stronger and better defined because members must prove their affiliation without being physically present (Williams 2006).

Brief History of Punk

In the United States, the first use of the word "punk" to describe musicians was in the mid 1970s. Punk at this time was integrated with the Avant-Guard artists of Andy Warhol and the heroin subculture of New York City. It featured only a few bands who all knew each other personally (McNeil and McCain 1996). There was no unifying philosophy behind it. These musicians (The Ramones, Iggy Pop, Lou Reed are some) influenced each other and had a growing following, but a scene in which new artists were emerging with a recognizable look and sound did not exist until after the British punk scene was well established. It is important to note that people were using the term "punk" prior to an accepted definition of punk, and early punk musicians had little concern with creating or defining a punk scene or punk movement.

For example, Lou Reed would hardly be considered punk by today's standards. By their own admission, the old New York bands were really rock performers who were experimenting with new sounds and new drugs (McNeil and McCain 1996). They wanted to distance themselves from hippies, who they disdained, for no clearly given reasons. Unlike later punk bands, the focus of these early punks was to further their careers and achieve financial success as well as fame. The official death of punk in the United States is often

marked as 1977 by these original artists who saw the uniqueness and purity of the movement spoiled because of fame, material gains, and lack of creativity (McNeil and McCain 1996). However, thousands of youth (at least) still refer to themselves as punks and still play punk music.

Structure of Punk Life

Punk quickly evolved into a counterculture movement, spreading to cities and suburbs throughout the United States. To secure that the music and scene suits their needs, punks employ a do-it-yourself ethic (DIY) wherein they produce their own music and create their own fashion (Wojcik 1995). By self-creating their scene, they have rejected the authority of others to superimpose ideals and fashion onto them. Punks have learned to publish their own magazines (fanzines), and have established their own mail order businesses to distribute their own records and homemade merchandise.

Fanzines, as punks call them, are independently created magazines that focus on bands and the punk scene. They are usually cheaply printed and have sections which review new bands and print interviews with bands. They also usually have a classified section, where people post the things they have for sale or trade and what they would like in exchange. Most significantly for the development of a punk identity, fanzines featured letters from readers. These letters, along with the editor's response, were printed and then responded to by other readers, and an ongoing discussion about what punk means or should mean ensued. Fanzines were a way that punks who were not in bands could actively participate in the scene; an added bonus to publishing a fanzine was receiving an abundance of free music that bands submitted for review. Prior to the internet, fanzines were the

primary way in which punks communicated at a national level.

In addition to publishing fanzines, punks also promote their own shows. Usually in a city, there are a handful of venues which regularly host punk shows and serve as the physical space where the scene exists. Punks can be destructive to venues, so proprietors often abandon punk and seek other uses for their space, or they charge too much money for shows, or they impose rules that punks find compromising to their scene. As a result of problems with venues, many punks rent empty spaces and host their own shows where they can control the atmosphere. They also create their own clothing for sale, such t-shirts or patches that promote bands, or leatherworks, such as spiked collars and bracelets. Punks have also started their own record labels to distribute their music and music that would never have received the attention of major record labels.

DIY is the fundamental ideal behind the philosophy of punk (O'Hara 1999). Egalitarian principles stem from DIY since it naturally assumes that no person has more value or authority than another. There is, in theory, an equal opportunity for any person to play any role in the punk scene; a sixteen-year-old fan has the same authority as a musician or a seasoned punk rocker. In the punk scene anything is possible, and often groups of teenagers are organizing concerts and small scale businesses to sell fanzines and homemade fan products. This is not to say that some punks are not more valuable than others but merely that punks have to earn their recognition and status based on what they do and how they live; good punks must embody their professed ideals without hypocrisy (O'Hara 1999). Punks are equal in their autonomy, but they must take the initiative to become active in the scene in order create the scene they want and to gain status. Therefore, punk becomes the skillful

accomplishment of its members.

Authenticity in punk is crucial to identity formation, and punks are engaged in evaluating the authenticity of each other's commitment to punk and the meaning of the movement in their lives. They are in constant dialogue with each other through editorial letters in fanzines and through the lyrics of the music. Punks have self-identified as subversives, often marginalizing themselves and choosing a life devoid of material comforts and traditionally desired accomplishments (Traber 2001).

Within the framework of DIY principles, punks develop a hierarchy based on their authenticity, or adherence to these principles; punk becomes for them an external reality, something to strive for, an identity to achieve (Fox 1987). Of course there is corporate cooptation of punk styles, such as the retail outlet Hot Topic which sells clothing that is pre-torn or held together with safety pins and patches, but the devout reject these establishments (Fox 1987). As with any cultural innovation that has commercial value, punk has been adopted by corporate cultural creators and marketed to larger audiences (Moore 2005). A contradiction develops within the punk movement as a result of its popularity among non-members. The goal of a social movement is to spread its values and increase visibility and support; however, the wider audience that is reached as a result of commercialization is not viewed as authentic, and the original innovation is no longer "cool, different, or rebellious" (Moore 2005:235).

Travel is an important part of participation in the punk scene. Young adults develop large social networks around the country based on a common affiliation with the punk lifestyle. The lifestyle is not specifically defined; it is thought to be a unique identity

developed once one abandons the pressures of conformity and corporate consumption (Lucas 2006, quoted in Glasper 2006). However, punk style is distinctive and recognizable. Brightly colored hair, multiple piercing and tattoos, homemade clothing, combat boots, and hyper-sexualized clothing (for females) are all indicators of membership to a punk community (Hebdige 1979, Wojcik 1995). The punk scene over the years has spawned multiple sub groups, each with their own recognizable sound and style of dress; some of these punk offspring are called crustcore, straightedge, horrorpunk, skate punk, and many more. Since these groups fall under the umbrella of punk and share the same historical roots, they will all be labeled "punk."

DIY forces punk to exist in the margins, and as such its survival is tenuous. To preserve the integrity of the scene, punks actively engage in defining punk and determining what is or is not "real punk." Many punks in the United States have middle-class parents and grew up in suburban neighborhoods; punks who leave these comfortable settings for the uncertainty of urban poverty and self-imposed marginalization are given higher status and regarded as more authentic (Traber 2001). The authentication process creates solidarity in the group and forces the incorporation of a political stance into the definition of punk, giving it a deeper meaning. They must not only articulate to themselves what is and is not punk, but they must also be prepared to show to others what distinguishes them from other members of society.

Membership

American punk scenes are largely composed of middle-class youths who feel alienated and disgusted with mainstream values (Wojcik 1995). If this is true, then

membership to a punk community will be temporary, contingent on disgust. As mainstream values change and are influenced by punk, as is shown by its commercialization, it becomes unnecessary to belong to a subculture that requires as much devotion and commitment as punk. After all, a participant in the punk subculture must be pro-active. The punk lifestyle--traveling to other towns via cheap transportation, attending loud and aggressive concerts two to three times a week, reading the latest fanzines, writing for fanzines, exchanging music, making t-shirts, dying one's hair, in addition to obligations within the mainstream culture, such as a job or family, is hard on the body and leaves little room for anything else in life. While this lifestyle is expected and praised in youth, as punks get older, their role in the punk scene changes from active creator to elder. Older punks who stay active in the scene serve to keep the history of the movement for the younger members; they are treated with reverence (Bennet 2006). However, they no longer can fully participate in the same way as members in their teens. Punks who are not in "age appropriate" roles are often ridiculed by other older punks (Davis 2006:64).

According to Linda Andes (1998), developing a punk identity involves three stages: rebellion, affiliation, and transcendence. Rebellion is making the choice to embrace deviance and going against cultural norms. This stage is usually marked by a drastic change of appearance, such as dying one's hair an unnatural color, like blue. The rebellion is against all that is mainstream, and actions in this stage are meant to shock; self-definition in this stage is made in opposition to the mainstream reference group. Affiliation is marked by a shift in reference group, from the mainstream to other punks. In this stage, punks learn to adopt a style that is not only shocking to the mainstream but also identifies them with the punk

movement. They begin to define themselves as members of a "subculture with a distinctive lifestyle" (Andes 1998:224). They also begin to learn the rules of belonging to this subculture, such as appropriate slam dancing techniques, and judge others who do not follow these rules as inauthentic. In the transcendence stage, the person no longer identifies with the scene or has a physical presence there. He or she no longer adorns the punk fashion or listens to punk or hardcore music. Membership to the scene becomes less important than the "ideological commitment of the subculture" (Andes 1998:226). In this stage, the punk no longer seeks acceptance of the subculture nor is concerned with the authenticity of other punks but remains committed to being autonomous. Punks who remain active in the scene after age thirty are expected to be more subdued and negotiate an identity that works in both the larger society and the punk scene, with the exception of "career punks" (those whose livelihood stems from the scene in some way) and "legends" who face no social sanctions if they never mature (Davis 2006).

Although it can be contended that punks do not have a concise plan for social change, in some sense their expression of discontent and choosing to live alternative lifestyles promotes social change from an individual standpoint. By changing their own lifesytles, they "symbolically issue cultural challenges" (Haenfler 2004:800). This cultural challenge is their avenue for social change. Punks offer a resistance to mainstream cultural lifestyles, which they define as consumption-oriented and conformist.

Collective Identity

Collective identity is the agreement members reach, after arduous negotiations, regarding the definition of boundaries of the group, the suitable activities for the group, and

membership qualifications (Johnston, Laraña, and Gusfield 1994). According to Alberto Melucci (1995), collective identity is a process that involves four steps:

> the continuity of a subject over and beyond variations in time and its adaptations to the environment; the delimitation of this subject with respect to others; the ability to recognize and to be recognized; and the defining responses and initiatives of the opponents and observers of the group (Melucci 1995, quoted in Beckwith 1998:149).

The punk movement has undergone these steps. Punk's ability to extend beyond the local scene to unify on a national and global level shows its continuity beyond the immediate social context to which it responds. The second step in the process corresponds to Andes (1998) "rebellion" stage; punks choosing to adopt an outward appearance that is markedly different than non-punks shows their deliberate efforts to demarcate insiders and outsiders. Punks have also taken the third step; they are easily recognized by other punks through hairstyles and clothing. However, not all punks adorn the colorful and shocking appearance that is the familiar perception; there are those who take more subtle approaches to recognition such as wearing buttons or t-shirts or placing stickers on their cars. The fourth step for punks is fulfilled by society's (not necessarily the "opponents" of the group) definition and perception of punk. This procedure leads to the ability of members of the group to refer to themselves collectively as "we."

Members maintain the boundaries of the punk movement through a commitment to a collective identity (Haenfler 2004). Punks easily recognize each other and can assume that others who "look" like them share the same collective ideals. Punks stand for equality; they oppose racism, sexism, homophobia, colonialism in all forms, censorship, and exploitation (O'Hara 1999). These are the core values that are found worldwide in punk scenes, and

members have expectations that they are shared by those who claim the status of punk. Other values such as ecological conservation and vegetarianism are also found in punk scenes, but they are not as universal. Sharp distinctions exist in how these values are practiced though, and there is much inconsistency between action and practice. Punks advocate civil disobedience, violence, peaceful direct-action, and some encourage solitude—choosing to drop out of a society they feel powerless to change (O'Hara 1999, Wojcik 1995).

Thus far research has focused on local scenes, providing descriptive accounts of the dynamics within a scene and participation at a local level or within a sub-group (Ranaghan and Breese 2004, Traber 2001, Fox 1987). My research will provide an understanding of punk on a broader, more ideological level. The methodology I use provides an understanding of what unites punks across regions into a national punk identity. Further, my research is unique because it examines the scene from the perspective of musicians, who can be viewed as the charismatic leaders of the punk movement. It contributes to the study of collective identity because punk can be conceived as a cultural movement, or newest form of social movement, wherein collective identity is crucial to maintaining the integrity of the group (Touraine 2004). Prior research which focuses on the style and culture of punk, such as Hebdige (1979), ignore the importance of punk as an anti-establishment, resistance movement. This research will reveal punk as a movement with well established political and cultural ideologies.

Chapter III:
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD

Introduction

In this chapter I detail the methodology and research design I used in this study. I explain how I collected the data, how the data were organized, and how the sample was selected for analysis. I also outline methods of data coding and analysis, the strengths and limitations of the method, and my role as a researcher and the extent of my involvement with punk music.

I would like first to briefly explain my expertise in punk music. I have listened to punk music since I began listening to music. My sister, who is eight years older, introduced me to the scene when I was ten years old (1986). I had the benefit of seeing many changes in punk in my lifetime as well as the benefit of my sister's experience in the earlier punk scene of Los Angeles. I have been active in punk scenes in Myrtle Beach, Charlotte, New Orleans, San Antonio, and Los Angeles. In my twenty years of punk life, I have had a variety of experiences within the scene and feel amply qualified to analyze the movement.

For this study, I have chosen a content analysis of the most popular punk songs over the twenty-nine years (1978-2007). Content analysis is the best method to uncover the themes within the punk movement, since music is central to membership in the group. The values held by members of the punk subculture can be found within the lyrics of the music and are central to the collective identity of the movement and to the personal identities of its members. Individual songs are the units of analysis, and lyrics are treated as text. Content analysis is a popular method of textual investigation, particularly for large samples of media

(Silverman 2001). Messages contained in the music are systematically examined by blending quantitative and qualitative content analysis techniques. Berg (2004) suggests this blend increases reliability and helps manage data. This research uses a two-step procedure.

Data Collection

The long history of punk and contended definitions of "real punk" make content analysis problematic. Choosing from the vast body of punk recordings was difficult to do with objectivity. I have minimized my subjectivity and personal preferences by including songs that are in current circulation and popularity. Since punk music has only recently received mainstream attention, there are no authoritative sources which list its artists or which indicate record sales and popularity. Much information about music is exchanged through fanzines and word of mouth, with punk bands as well as fans making use of the Internet for networking. To improve my selection process I visited an independent music store, in business since 1976, in a white, middle-class suburb of Los Angeles. This store specializes in non-mainstream music and has a large selection of "punk." The clientele for this store also fit the punk profile. I listed the artists whose albums are sold at this store and then located their discographies on the Internet. I also used popular books (Blush 2001, Hurchalla 2006) and links from bands' websites to find other artists.

I compiled a list of 550 American bands and created a database indicating which years they released albums or singles. Data about production dates were obtained through bands' official websites, their record labels' websites, lyric archive websites, or MySpace websites. An assistant helped me gather the data. To qualify for selection, the artists were American or Canadian, produced between 1978 and 2007, and had at least one album

distributed by an independent label. Although many major labels have distributed punk albums, the authenticity of a punk band who signs to a corporate label is always questioned; therefore, only those who produced an album with DIY tactics were considered. However, if subsequent albums were produced by a major label, they were still included, based on the assumption that once achieving punk status, the artists will still have an influence on the punk scene. Canadian bands that frequently toured the United States were included because they were considered part of American hardcore (Blush 2001). Based on these criteria, only 159 bands qualified for selection, 67 from California, 17 from New York, 5 from Canada and the rest evenly distributed across the country.

I grouped the years into three waves 1978-1989 (first wave), 1990-1999 (second wave), 2000-2007 (third wave). It is appropriate to divide the years into decades since we commonly look at popular culture along these lines. Punk in the United States peaked in 1977 and the years following are often referred to as the postpunk era. The hardcore movement, a faster, more aggressive and less fashion-oriented version of punk began in 1980. The two years prior to hardcore—a term coined by Joey Keithley of Canadian Band DOA (Keithley 2003)—are included in the first wave because all the active bands in those years continued on into the 1980s. Hardcore began declining in 1986 and by the end of the decade was nearly extinct (Blush 2001). The sound and style of the music changed and a multitude of sub-genres emerged after hardcore's peak, but they all share common characteristics of rebellion and anger. The use of the word punk here includes all those bands who might be affiliated with other sub-genres such as straightedge or crustcore.

Sample Selection

I randomly selected 15% of the bands in the first and second waves and 39% of the bands in the third wave and analyzed their complete discographies produced within that wave, resulting in a sample of 678 songs (first wave N=275, second wave N=288, third wave N=115). There was consistency among the themes and the sample size (15%) was large enough to demonstrate saturation. Bands that were labeled as second wave were not active in the first, and those that were labeled as third wave were neither active in the first nor second waves. As such, only 13 bands met the criteria for the third wave. I selected a larger random sample for the third wave (39%) in order to have enough lyrics to cross-compare the three waves. There may be many reasons for the dramatic drop in third wave bands. The availability and willingness of major record labels to sign punk bands makes independent production unnecessary. Also, the reach of distribution of small, independent labels may be delayed, and as such those bands may not have yet been available in southern California, where I gathered my data. Despite having considerably less songs to select from, the sample still produced saturation within the themes I examined.

Eleven bands were active in all four waves. While any band that stays productive for thirty years is noteworthy and influential, it is my judgment that a band's philosophy is formed during its early years and whose peak was of another era will not reveal much about the collectivity of the era under study.

Data Analysis

I created a codesheet for each wave, listing possible themes and marked when each theme was present in a song. I specifically looked for attitudes toward authority and politics,

race, gender, class, drugs and lifestyle. I also noted what types of action, if any, were advocated and what is the overall outlook toward society, the future, and the punk scene. Songs were coded based on explicit messages or ones that could reasonably be determined without extensive knowledge of the band. When in doubt, I consulted with a hardcore fan whose knowledge of the music covers areas with which I am unfamiliar. There were no serious difficulties in coding the songs. I then summed each category and determined what percentage of the total songs dealt with each issue. After categorizing the songs, I looked more qualitatively at the lyrics to see what the bands are specifically saying about these issues. I noted inconsistencies within each category in a wave, within each category between waves, and how the themes relate to each other to produce an overall punk value system. I correlate significant differences between waves with concurrent social and political events and with the evolution of the punk scene.

Strengths of Method

This method is an effective and systematic way to examine the music of the punk movement. The artistry and showmanship of the performers are absent, thereby allowing the product to be examined in its fundamental form. Music often evokes an emotional response, and the charisma of the performers can cloud a listener's ability to see patterns in the way issues are discussed and how their own views may be affected by the messages in the songs. The quantitative component of the analysis shows the relative importance of themes by virtue of how often they show up in the lyrics; it also gives points of comparison between waves. The qualitative component elaborates on the complexities and contradictions found in punk music and offers a broader view of how these themes are conceptualized by punks.

The initial coding of the songs necessarily reflects my subjective understanding of their meanings. However, my knowledge and experience with this music are broad in scope, and I can offer an insider perspective. My experience listening to the music not only gives me an advantage to interpreting the lyrics but also potentially biases the findings toward my preconceived ideas about the movement. To minimize these biases I exhaustively searched for bands--rather than select those with which I am familiar--randomly selected bands from my list, and conferred with another expert on questionable lyrics. The sample features a disproportionate number of bands from California and New York. There are many possibilities for this occurrence. New York, of course, was the historical birthplace of American punk, so it had the foundation which has allowed many more bands to form. Also, since punk scenes are most active at the local level, music from other parts of the country are less likely to appear in a record store in California--where I collected much of my sample. These two states are also known for tolerance of different lifestyles, and punks who feel alienated and ostracized in small towns flock to big cities where they can express themselves freely. California and New York are heavily populated regions, increasingly the likelihood of more punks in the area, and California has four major scenes--Los Angeles, Orange County, San Diego, and San Francisco. Further, these states are also often credited with setting trends for the rest of the country; therefore, the influence of punk bands from these regions is likely to be strong in other parts of the national punk scene.

Limitations of Method

One of the problems with this content analysis is that it narrowly focuses on one element of punk expression to the exclusion of others, therefore not providing the holistic

understanding of the punk movement that would be possible with an ethnography. The elements of a punk identity, such as music, clothing, live concerts, and other social activities may be more relevant when examined collectively rather than independently. Since other studies (Baron 1989, Fox 1987, Ranaghan and Breese 2004) have focused exclusively on the movement culture, we can assume a similar context for where and how punks consume their music. Given the lack of research in this area, I find it appropriate to begin with a basic analysis of what punk music says about punks and what it says to punks because music is the constant and the central organizing principle of the punk movement.

Since the research is designed to determine an ideological statement, the nuances of sarcasm or humor may be neglected. Also, since the songs were viewed as text, rather than listening to them with music, the inflections of voice and speed and style of music, which enhance the listener's emotional response, will not be considered. Despite these limitations, the research provides a fundamental understanding of the primary message in these songs.

Chapter IV:
FINDINGS

Introduction

The first analysis I present briefly describes the common themes found in the lyrics. It also summarizes the frequency distribution along the themes for each of the three waves. Many themes were present in a single song, so the sum of all frequencies does not equal one hundred percent. I have grouped the themes into five general areas. Area one (see table 1), authority and politics, includes themes of government and police, anarchy, war, terrorism, ecology, religion, and corporations. Area two (see table 2), inequality, includes themes of class, gender, homosexuality, and race. Area three (see table 3), lifestyle, includes themes of conformity, consumption, drugs, straight-edge, the scene, and nostalgia. Area four (see table 4), personal issues, includes themes of relationships, isolation, mental illness, and suicide. Area five (see table 5), action, includes themes of change, violence, and non violence. See figure 1 for a depiction of the three waves across these themes. The second section is a discursive analysis of the most important themes, using representative quotations to illustrate the punk rock identity; the songs used as examples stand out as clearly representative of the time period. In this section, I indicate where shifts in attitude occur in the different waves.

Frequencies

Common characteristics found in all the music was anger and frustration toward the status quo. The spirit of rebellion in punk music remains unchanged, although the specific outlets and targets for this aggression have. The most common assault takes place on formal authority structures, such as national government and police agencies. These songs take the

form of sarcasm toward politics, police brutality, corruption, oppression of the state, and collectively, authorities are often referred to as fascists. Government, politicians, and police are the subject of 28% of the first wave songs, 24.6% of the second wave, and 25.2% of the third wave. Alternative governments are not proposed in the first wave, but anarchy is championed in the second wave in 1.8% of the songs, and in the third wave its popularity increases to 3.5%. Environmental concerns are also increasing in popularity, more than doubling in frequency in the third wave to account for 7.8% of the songs. Commentary about war is slight in the first wave, only 3.6% of the lyrics, but comprises 5.6% of songs in the second wave and 14.8% of the third wave. These numbers correspond directly to the United States' involvement in the first and second wars in Iraq.

Religion is also a frequent subject in the lyrics. Songs about religion speak about organized religious institutions, hypocrisy of religious beliefs, the religiosity of individuals, and sometimes directly address personal religious beliefs. Formal religion is often grouped with other forms of authority and given the fascist label. Songs with religious references are most prevalent in the first wave, found in 11.3% of the sample. Religion loses importance in the subsequent waves, accounting for only 6.9% of the second wave, slightly gaining importance in the third wave to account for 9.6% of the sample.

Corporations also receive punk attention. Punks sing about individuals' relationships to corporations, corporations' relationship to authority structures, and corporations' influence on lifestyles and identities of others. Corporations are almost always seen as an enemy to the environment, to autonomy, and to the punk scene. Corporations are the subject of 8% of the songs of the first wave, 7.6% of the second wave, and 6.0% of the third wave.

Oppression and equality are also on the punk agenda. Punks are conscious of class differences and sing about them from the perspective of members of lower strata or sarcastically role-play as members of the upper strata, imposing rules and restricting the lives of others. They also sing about the extra struggles facing those in poverty ridden neighborhoods, like lack of employment opportunities, substandard housing, drugs and crime. The songs usually blame governments or corporations for conditions of inequality. Class struggles and poverty related issues are found in 22.2% of the songs in the first wave, then drops significantly to 8.7% in the second wave, and 7.8% of the third wave.

Gender inequality is also confronted in punk songs. Here I coded when the subject of the song was gender, masculinity or femininity, and not the subtle ways in which the artists express their personal gender. Gender is the subject of 12.4% of the songs of the first wave, then drops to 5.9% in the second wave, and 5.2 in the third. Homosexuality as a separate subject is not as common but is found in 2.5% of the first wave songs, 1% of the second wave, and 3.5% of the third.

Race is not dealt with in traditional ways. Racism is confronted through against racists, but the specific struggles of minorities are not addressed. Again the government is often blamed for racial inequality and racism. In some occasions, racial pejoratives are used; they are presented as the viewpoint of mainstream white Americans or as the dialogue of police officers or government officials. Race is the subject of 6.9% of the songs in the first wave, 5.2% in the second wave, and 3.5% in the third.

Outside of political issues, lifestyle issues are the subject of many punk songs. Punk is foremost a rebellion, which is reflected in the frequent occurrence of themes of conformity

in the music. Conformity is universally rejected in the music of all waves, except in circumstances where there are calls for unity among punks. Two types of conformity are addressed--conformity to the norms of mainstream society and conformity to the fashion and trends within the punk scene. Conformity is equated with thoughtlessness and complacency. Although punks are anti-conformity, conformity to ideals of punk, not the clothing, is encouraged. Closely related to themes of conformity are themes of consumption, since mainstream America is viewed as a consumer society by punks. Conformity is the subject of 25.8% of the songs of the first wave, 28.1% of the second wave, and 40% of the third. Drugs, crime, and alcohol lifestyles are also frequent subjects of songs. There are mixed messages about drug use, some songs bragging of drunkenness and others lamenting lost lives of friends who used drugs. Drugs are the subject of 12% of songs of the first wave, 11.5% of the second wave, and 18.3% of the third.

The punk identity and the state and purpose of the punk scene is a frequent theme of punk songs. These songs often are also about conformity and complacency of punks. Some bands seek to unify the scene and channel the energy and talents of punks for social change. Some of them criticize the latest fads or violence at shows. Some advocate the DIY ethic or praise their own authenticity as punks. The scene is the subject of 13.5% of the songs of the first wave, 20.1% of the second wave, and 28.6% of the third. In the second and third waves, nostalgia is introduced as bands lament the end of the glory days of punk.

Complaints are common, but calls for actions are rarely advocated in the songs: 13.5% in the first wave, 13.2% in the second wave, and 10.4% in the third. The lack of any practical or organized action shows punk to be different than other social movements. It is a

movement which is primarily expressive yet has an outward focus and a concern for the quality of society. The few calls for action encourage punks to participate in direct-action protests, violent riots, squatting, dropping out of society, non violence, solidarity and conviction, or general resistance. Frequency of violent narratives or violence advocated in the lyrics is growing: 6.6% in the first wave, 15.6% in the second wave, and 18.3% in the third. Of songs that are oriented toward the future, the overwhelming majority of them have an apocalyptic outlook: 76% of the first wave, 80% of the second wave, 76.9% of the third.

Although the majority of punk lyrics have an outward focus, songs that deal with personal issues became popular in the second wave. In the first wave, they were practically nonexistent, with only 1% of the songs representing personal troubles. Personal issues were coded as those relating to love and relationships, identity confusion, isolation, mental illness, and suicide. Many punks feel that they might be mentally ill or that they have been driven to insanity. Personal issues peaked as themes in the second wave at 23.3% and then declined to 10.4% in the third wave. The decline in the third wave may be due to the emergence of the "Emo" (short for emotional) genre of music, which musicians may have found to be a better outlet for this type of expression.

Themes:

Conformity

Punk is oppositional culture. Punks define themselves as the others--they are other than everything that is socially acceptable or expected. They question everything that is traditional. Traditionality and conformity is equated with stupidity and mindlessness, with becoming a tool of authorities, with losing one's soul. Conformity, as viewed by punks, is

belonging to popular youth groups such as jocks or preppies, consuming the latest trendy products, supporting nationalism, racism, sexism, or just following blindly what authorities or peers tell them to do. Punks choose a life that they feel is not easy, and they see their nonconformity as a sacrifice they are willing to make for what is right. By not belonging to popular society, they make their statement that the ways of others are wrong:

> Don't need no ivory liquid
> Don't want no afro sheen
> Don't need the latest fashions
> Don't want my hair to smell clean
> (Bad Brains, "Don't Need It" 1982)

The first wave of punk felt the need to point out the superficiality of following trends. They wanted to demonstrate the loss of independence that comes with conformity: "Now do not question and do not think / Just follow blindly and listen to me" (Youth Brigade, "Duke of Earl" 1984). Conformity remains important throughout the waves of punk, but each era brings its own confrontations with mainstream culture based on shifting and evolving sociohistorical conditions.

The first wave's message was to tell punks not to be like others; they seldom attacked the conformists directly. On the other hand, the second wave takes a stance of superiority:

> Walking down the streets
> Idiots are all I fucking see
> Morons right in front of me
> Showing off their silicon tits
> Pounds of makeup hide their zits
> (98 Mute, "Them" 1996)

The singer assumes that women who artificially beautify themselves are morons. He does not know their political beliefs or what they have accomplished in their lives; he simply

judges them based on appearance. Ironically, it is punks who claim that these others judge them in this way.

In the first and second waves, a hatred for conformity is not a hatred for belonging to a group, but rather a concern that the need to belong replaces critical thinking. In the third wave, conformity is just the enemy: "Bent to belong-Not me" (Terror 2004). This commitment to nonconformity is the essence of punk identity; however, punks themselves are conformists. They have their own fashions and behavioral expectations for belonging to the group. A considerable number of songs confront the issue of conformity to the subculture, which is just as offensive as conformity to mainstream culture. Conformity to the scene is a more important issue in the second and third waves: "You think you're tough / But wearing Doc Martens just ain't enough" (98 Mute, "Last Laugh" 1996). Doc Martens are a British brand of boots that resemble combat boots. Punks have adopted a militaristic fashion since their beginnings (Hebdige 1979). Punk has been commodified and commercialized, so where punk style in the past was considered freakish and unique, now it is easily recognized as punk. Today, these boots symbolize membership to the punk community, although they are expensive, mass produced, and marketed to youths. Purchasing and wearing these boots, however, not only violates the anti-corporate, anti-consumption spirit of punk rock, but it does not guarantee acceptance by the punk community. This is yet another inconsistency of the punk philosophy, but punks are aware of it and sing about it. The scene, which is a source of empowerment for punks can also become a source of oppression when the definition of membership becomes fixed, such as through the purchase and adornment of specific items. A fixed definition of the movement conflicts with the notion that collective

identity must be negotiated between members (Beckwith 1998). Punks do not want to feel forced to conform to the scene although some degree of conformity is necessary to the scene to exist. The sense that punk is something more than a fashion statement is given by lyrics that condemn adherence to punk styles: "Consider this a challenge, there's problems unresolved / Forget about your fashion show and start to get involved" (The Pist, "Threat" 1996).

The Scene

Since the beginning of punk, bands have questioned what the scene is really about and what purpose it serves. Bands are ever critical of the scene, it must be constantly renewed and defined. The mere existence of a scene for punks to socialize and be different has never been satisfying to punks. Although nearly all the songs in the sample took issue with some element of society, a small minority actually advocated a course of action. Those that did sought to harness the resources within the punk community for social change. Living the punk life is viewed as a freedom from the slavery of conformity, but it must come with a price. Punk is seen as a privilege: "No safety comes from your numbers / Shirking responsibility / True freedom from what?" (Dag Nasty, "Under Your Influence," 1986). The singer criticizes punks for group mentality and feels that they have a responsibility to spread their message. The ideals of punk are lofty, and short of complete restructuring of society, are unlikely to be realized. Still, punks soldier on:

Be positive, no ignorance
To mindlessness, we must protest
'Cause we're for real, we're gonna prove
That our movement's on the move
Fuck big business, church and war,
That's not what we're fighting for
(7 Seconds, "Definite Choice" 1984)

There is a fight between punks and society; they consider themselves to be in a movement. The first wave of punk largely viewed the scene in a positive light, with the exception of problems with violence and drug abuse.

In the second wave attitudes toward the scene take a completely different perspective. The scene is split and argument takes place over the merits of signing contracts with major labels. Major labels became interested in punk bands in the early 1990s. When bands like Nirvana and the Seattle music culture became popular, companies sought to capitalize on other alternative subcultures (Moore 2005). Band who signed to major labels rationalized their actions as being able to reach a larger audience, while others who remained independent criticized their authenticity. The majority of the bands take the pro-independence side of the argument:

Corporate trash
Needs your cash
They wont play
Unless you pay
(Choking Victim, "Corporate Trash" 1999)

The idea of being paid well for a performance somehow cheapens the meaning of involvement in the scene; it reduces punks to rock stars. Bands who do not make any money for their work, view their commitment to the scene with pride: "It has always been frustrating to try to explain why we play shows for gas money and sometimes less" (Boy Sets

Fire, "Loser of the Year Award" 1998). Bands show a commitment to their ideals that sometimes compromises their material comforts.

On the other side of the argument, bands feel that they deserve to earn a living for their craft:

> Don't talk to me about selling out cause I wont be listening
> You're just another jaded kid who doesn't see
> I'm making money that's quickly spent
> I've got a family and you ain't gotta worry 'bout the rent
> Is it too much to ask do me a favor and close that punk rock rulebook
> (88 Fingers Louie, "Punk Rock Rulebook" 1998)

Devotion of fans is not something that punk bands can count on; they are under constant scrutiny and their choices are always questioned. Punks do not idolize band members and hold them on a pedestal. Crowds can easily turn on bands that they feel are behaving like rock stars. It is unclear if bands who reject the notion of signing to major record labels have ever been offered a contract which they declined. It would be useful to know if, when given a choice, they would choose independent production over mainstream distribution.

The commercialization of punk has also created a new type of conceptualization of the scene. Bands of the second and third waves nostalgically speak of the glory days of punk, when they feel that the sentiments were real and pure:

> Here's to the spirit of '77
> And the punk rock of the past
> The time for change has finally arrived
> And now I know punk will survive
> The old timers, they won't come around
> But we don't need them to keep punk around
> (Blanks 77, "Spirit of '77" 1996)

The spirit of punk is independent of the people who were there. This song speaks to the

popular notion that punk is dead. Obviously, punk performers of present would take issue with those who are no longer active in the scene and claim that real punk no longer exists. Hero worship is discouraged in the punks scene, but there is a special consideration for punks of earlier times:

> A needle on the vinyl will always take me back in time
> ...
> Many have gone
> Can you remember any song
> Those who have passed
> Their passion lives on
> (Pistol Grip, "Broken Radio" 2003)

This nostalgia goes beyond remembering the height or origins of the punk movement. Bands of later waves remember political issues that were important in those early days as well. Songs about the PMRC (Parent's Music Resource Center, Tipper Gore's organization that was responsible for parental advisory warning labels on albums), Ronald Reagan, cold war and the fear of nuclear holocaust are still being sung today. Today's youth have no memory of these events, yet they identify with these issues. This generation gap between the first wave and subsequent waves shows that there is a continuity of the movement. Members are interested in preserving the history of punk as well as honoring those who came before.

Some bands have recognized that nostalgia can hinder punk from being a successful social movement since it ignores current social problems.

The same old heartbreaking story about some poor kid whose life sucks
Thinking that he's gonna change the world through another angry song
Well I don't see progress just repetition, same old songs about oppression
...
Yeah I know we all got problems and I don't think that this song is going to solve them
Why can't you find your own inspiration instead of sponging off last year's condensation

(Against Me, "Same Old Song" 2001)

Punks engage in dialogue through their songs. They encourage each other's vigilance and criticize each other. The outward focus of punk music is evident as bands try to make sense of the punk world and guide the collectivity.

Drugs

Substance abuse is common in punks scenes, particularly by members of bands (Keithley 2003). However, punk's message about drug use is not favorable. Most songs about drugs describe people whose lives have been ruined or who wasted their anger--a valuable commodity to punks. There are inconsistencies in the movement in regard to drug use. There are some mixed messages, some bands praising the joys of alcoholism, but by far the message is that drugs ruin lives:

Look what you've done to your arms
I see you don't care who you harm
I understand you've never been the girl next door
But now you're worse off than before

(Black Flag, "Life of Pain" 1981)

The drug user has only exacerbated her problems by using drugs. The concern for others' drug problems seems counterintuitive to punk acceptance of lifestyle choices.

Drugs are seen as coping mechanisms, which connects their use to the various form of oppression that punks are concerned with, particularly poverty and low wage jobs: "And

when there is no hope, / I'll smoke crack, I'll shoot dope" (Choking Victim, "500 Channels" 1999). Hopelessness is a common sentiment in the second wave of punk, whereas the first wave displayed excitement and a sense that problems could be resolved and anything is possible. Second wave punks turn to alcohol, and their depression worsens: "I used to drink from the bottle, but now the bottle seems to drink from me" (Blood for Blood, "All Fucked Up" 1998). Drugs and alcohol fulfill emotional needs, and songs in the second wave are from the first person perspective of the drug user.

In the third wave, the songs return to third-person perspective:

> Ritchie was an old friend of mine
> He took lots of pills to pass the time
> Used to be filled with political conviction
> He started to struggle with heroin addiction
> (Cheap Sex, "Russian Roulette" 2006)

Punk songs about drugs are good indicators of the unity that is felt by punks and the impending social change they hope to create; they only hope that drugs and alcohol will not hinder their cause.

Perhaps one of the largest, most unified sub-genres of punk is the straightedge movement (Haenfler 2004). Musically they listen to hardcore, but they do not use alcohol, tobacco, drugs, abstain from casual sex, and, to a lesser degree, are vegetarians and Krishna devotees (Haenfler 2004). Straightedgers have developed separate consciousness from punk and are not featured in this analysis. However, there are bands who abstain from substances who consider themselves punk and not straightedge. They view indulgence in alcohol as supporting corporations who destroy the environment and promote sexism through advertising; therefore a punk has a responsibility to abstain (O'Hara 1999). These views do

not reflect the reality of punk life, but they show the idealism and commitment punks have to their rebellion.

Authority

Hatred for police runs deep within the punk world. Police are not seen as protectors of citizens but as the enemy of poor people, minorities, and punks. They are seen as authoritarians who have no rules to follow and can unleash violence on the public for their own amusement:

> Pregnant woman from east L.A.
> Asked who knocked, they would not say
> Refused to answer, those sheriffs went wild
> Shot her in the stomach, she lost her child
> Just another police related death
> (MDC, "Police Related Death" 1987)

The first wave is marked by feelings of unity among the oppressed, although the oppression in the case of punks is sought by those who choose to reject convention and question authority. The bands see government, religion, and corporations as inseparable oppressors, thereby creating an us-versus-them mentality. Punks in this wave see their role as vigilantes and use their music to expose the atrocities committed by those to whom we entrust our safety.

Hatred toward police continues in the second and third waves: "You swore to serve and protect / But who protects us from you" (Against All Authority, "Above the Law" 1996). There are numerous complaints of police brutality toward them and others; rioting is praised, and violence is advocated against police. Punks do not admit to provoking the police nor feel any responsibility for the confrontations they have had with police.

In the first wave, military personnel are criticized for violent behavior and gang mentality. They are equated with "jocks" and "rednecks" which are the sworn conformist enemies of punks. In the second and third wave however, soldiers are seen as victims of political game playing. They join the group of the oppressed: "I was too young to be in your crusade / I should have had a choice but it was yours to make" (Pistol Grip, "P.O.W." 2001) . The singer is reflecting on the plight of those who were drafted in the Vietnam war.

The government is seen as protecting the interests of corporations and the wealthy and should never be trusted because politicians lie and brainwash citizens:

> Hey! Yo! We're the United States Marines
> We know you've all been killing each other
> For at least two thousand years
> But we're here now
> Protect the family of Christian heroin warlords
> (Dead Kennedys, "Potshot Heard 'Round the World"

The government's intentions are never good in punk music. They cannot be trusted and the media is their weapon in convincing us to accept their dubious plans: "If you think you're free / You're only free to follow lies" (Naked Aggression, "Mind Control" 1993). To punks, freedom is illusory, and the ideology of freedom has distorted reality in the minds of Americans. The way in which punks speak of the government as its own entity also does not allow for anyone in particular to be held accountable. They do mention specific leaders or events, but for the most part they fight against a blanket of authority that seeks to lie to them, use them, take their lives, and become wealthy from their pain. They detest the symbolism of America, such as the flag because to them America symbolizes cultural ideologies of corruption and greed. Ideas of Anarchy as a replacement for the current system are implied

with the amount of rage that is directed toward authority. However, anarchy is never laid out as a realistic plan, nor is any revolutionary government restructuring. They use the word anarchy frequently to symbolize complete freedom. However, many bands seek to work within the existing system to right injustices, often calling themselves the true patriots or real lovers of America:

> Throw down your weapons
> And fight against the war
> And give the money
> To help the homeless and poor
> (Total Chaos, "Lives are Squandered" 1994)

Punks' politics are wrought with contradiction which may stem from the young age and poor educational attainment of members of the group (Grossman 1996).

Class

Members of the punk community identify with the working class. Their sentiments have a Marxist tone as they feel exploited in low wage jobs: "On your way to the slaughter house, they want you in your prime / Work you for a shitty wage and tell you that you could climb" (Battalion of Saints, "Beefmasters" 1984). Songs like this are widespread in the first wave, all written in a similar vein. The bands recognize exploitation but are not content with it. They want to empower themselves over their oppressors: "The bourgeoisie had better watch out for me / We don't want your filthy money / We just want to end your world" (Bad Brains, "Fearless Vampire Killers" 1982). The prevalence of class issues in the songs of the second and third waves drops dramatically, but the sentiments remain the same. Middle class people and corporations are viewed as the enemy and particularly harmful to a person's creativity and humanity: "The lower class must be kept under control / They keep us

uniformed and make it hard to survive / So we drown in apathy and don't question why" (Naked Aggression, "Silent War" 1994). Although the life of a wage worker is not pleasant, punks do not view traditional means of mobility as an alternative:

> Go to school waste of time
> End up workin 9 to 5
> Persecuted all your life
> Cuz your collar's blue and not white
> Up the system
> (Blanks 77, "Up the System" 1997)

The singer has no faith in the belief that education will give a person better job opportunities; instead, he directs his anger to the entire system. Punks seek unity among those who experience class oppression; they frequently call for a "class war" where they feel they will emerge victorious because they outnumber the rich. In the third wave, punks are taking class consciousness personally:

> Stepped on since day one
> Taught to accept defeat
> Expectations of failure
> Always told I was nothing
> (Terror, "One With the Underdogs" 2004)

The singer feels a sense of pride being an underdog; it is his identity. Punks reject the middle class life that they feel they have been denied access to, although most American punks hail from middle-class families (Baron 1989, Traber 2001). They often ridicule those who have middle-class ambitions or seek to have material comforts: "I want a big suburban home with a wrought-iron fence / Don't need a pool I'll just swim in my own arrogance" (Pistol Grip, "Bourgeoisie" 2001). They exhibit their own kind of elitism, the belief that being low is better (Grossman 1996). They have rejected their class habitus and adopted a new one.

According to Bourdieu, a habitus reflects a person's disposition for action and is shaped by social conditions of birth and structural influences of work and education; taste is also defined by a person's habitus (Calhoun 2000). By leaving their middle class habituses, punks are also rejecting the consumption preferences of that class and adopting new ones associated with urban poverty and struggle.

Their sentiments and their self-imposed marginalization may be due to the economic conditions of the late 1980s. During that time the expectations for jobs for the middle class had declined as well as programs that were designed to help move people into the middle class (Traber 2001). These were the formative years of punk, and ideas about class continued into the later years. Subsequent improvements in economy may account for the declining frequency of class discussion in the music.

Gender

Punk women are held to high standards. One of the starkest inconsistencies within the movement is the area of gender. There are contradictory notions of punk womanhood. Women are expected to have substance and not be superficially preoccupied with fashion or popularity. The songs praise equality for women, yet male singers often objectify women as sex objects and take on paternal roles as women's protectors. Women who follow trends are ridiculed in songs:

> Fiorucci nightmare, asshole's dream
> Spend all your money on the fashion machine
> ...
> Down in Georgetown in a fashion race
> For the guys to see how high you rate
> (Teen Idles, "Fiorucci Nightmare" 1980)

For these early punks, women's desire to be in high fashion was destructive to their autonomy, and their worth was based on the approval of men. This song demonstrates an anger toward women, but punks also expressed anger toward men who perpetuate traditional gender stereotypes:

> There's girls who put out fanzines, others put on shows
> Yet they're not allowed to get out on the floor. [slam pit]
> Some make music, well that you can accept.
> Hell, maybe live you'll get some tits and ass
> You fucking moron, your brains have run amuck,
> A girl's only lot in life is not to fuck!
> (7 Seconds, "Not Just Boys' Fun" 1984)

Women were precluded from full participation in the punk scene even though their contributions matched those of men, although there were far fewer women in total. Leblanc (2002) has detailed women's experiences in the punk movement. Punk's legacy was that it sought to create entirely new ways of viewing life, and every institution and tradition were questioned. Masculinity is viewed in a similar way, although it is spoken about more subtly and less frequently. Nevertheless, men are also held to high standards, and the acting out of male privilege is condemned as mindless conformity. Traditional roles for men are equated with violence and destruction as well as sexism and racism. Punks also express anger that this type of behavior is praised and accepted by society and consequently challenge hegemonic masculinity. The Dead Kennedys often satire the behavior of men:

> Name one thing on earth lower than a tough guy
> Who talks with his fists instead of using his head
> Who beats the shit out of anything he can't understand
> Behind the muscle mask is a scared little boy
> (Dead Kennedys, "Macho Insecurity" 1986)

Although the behavior is condemned, some sympathy for these men is evoked, since they are

merely living up to society's expectations of them.

The first wave was idealistic about most issues, including gender, but they were still hedonistic, and like other musical genres, they wrote about sex. However, for early punks sexual attraction did not interfere with a woman's independence. The band Fear demonstrates how sex can be a woman's choice, under her terms:

> She don't like fashions
> She don't like phonies
> She don't like junkies, she don't like druggies
> She just wants my beef baloney
> (Fear, "Beef Baloney" 1982).

The woman here does not follow trends, but pursues her own interest in sex with the singer.

The second wave of punk continued these traditions, but the songs began more to speak of girls as equals in the scene:

> Sexism sucks! It didn't end in the 80's
> And hardcore still needs another song for the ladies
> Girlfriends are great, please don't get me wrong
> But it's time to put down that coat and come sing along
> (Good Clean Fun, "A Song For The Ladies" 1998)

Political issues, such as abortion and prostitution, take the forefront of punk songs in the second wave as well. The sentiment is clear that women's bodies are their own and should not be regulated by the state or by men. Naked Aggression, the only band in the sample with a female front person, states the feminist viewpoint simply and dramatically: "I had an abortion in a back alley / And now I'm bleeding to death on the killing floor" (Naked Aggression, "Killing Floor" 1993).

For all their claims of equality, however, men still view themselves as protectors. In Against All Authority's "Daddy's Little Girl" (1998), the singer seeks to protect a girl who

has experienced sexual abuse instead of encouraging her to protect herself or seek revenge on her assailant. On another track, "12:00 A.M.," the singer will save a girl from prostitution by running away with her to squat in a cardboard box in Florida. Despite the singer's own status as a homeless squatter, he still feels a paternal role toward women and must provide for them because they are weaker and more vulnerable.

The contradictions between gender attitudes in punk mirror those in mainstream society. However, punks express their views in the same aggressive and frank manner as they always do. Their views could be seen as progressive but in no way meet the idealistic standards of equality which they profess. The second wave of punk can be seen as a continuation of the first, with more references to women in the scene as they became more active as punks. The music of the third wave, though, does not seem to be connected to its predecessors. In fact, songs about women in the third wave do not resemble punk songs at all. They could easily be pop songs on the radio. They are about feelings and desires. They praise women for their appearance rather than condemn them for trying to attract men:

> There's no need to think about anyone else
> Cause tonight little girl I got you all to myself
> Never want to say goodnight
> When you're looking so outta sight
> (Cheap Sex, "Take A Chance" 2003)

The singer wants the woman to take a chance on him. He does not desire her convictions or her brain but appreciates her appearance and tries to appeal to her pity. Women in the third wave are also seen as support systems for men's accomplishments, similar to mainstream society. "She's all that keeps me going, she's all that keeps the fight in me. / I try to hold onto my roots, she crowds my memory. / She holds onto me, when all I wanna do is sleep"

(Against Me, "24 Hours a Day" 2002). Here the singer praises the woman who stands by him and encourages his activism, rather than encouraging her own.

Homosexuality in the songs of all three waves is not a political issue. The bands do not sing for equal rights for homosexuals; instead they seek to dispel stereotypes and include gay people in their scene. For instance, the Dwarves simply state "Gay guys don't wear pink" (1986). Many punk performers have played shows naked and in drag, and have pushed boundaries with simulated gay sex on stage. Information about sexual orientation of band members is scarce, but openly gay band members are few, although a sub-genre of punk called queercore emerged in the middle 1990s. However, punks have sought to break down the rigid distinctions between gay and straight. One song speaks of the beauty of a transvestite:

> Everybody's liking what they see
> A pretty face in a magazine
> Are you a lady or a closet queen
> Cuz your just not another pretty face
> (Blanks 77, "Drag" 1997)

It does not matter to the singer if the face belongs to a woman or a man, rather that it is beautiful. He knows something about the person that other admirers do not, but it does not anger him that he cannot identify the gender of the person. The first two waves display a subtle, not solid, acceptance of homosexuality. However, the third wave bands express their views in more explicit ways: "Relinquish the odd gender / I am not in a social bender / I am not a freak" (Limp Wrist, "Just Like You" 2003). All the band members of Limp Wrist are gay. They feel equally entitled in the punk scene, and they freely express their anger in their songs. Their other songs openly discuss their sexual escapades with hardcore boys.

Queercore is a movement within the punk culture which seeks to promote gay activism and gay tolerance; it often is at odds with other, more established gay activist groups whose politics queercore bands often find oppressive (Ciminelli and Knox 2005). Limp Wrist is considered a militant queercore band, as they make no apologies for their sexual desires and, in true punk fashion, do not care who may be uncomfortable with them.

Race

Skinheads, both traditional and white supremacist, have a presence in punk scenes. Traditional skinheads were working-class youth from England and formed a unity based on class status; they were not racist and listened to reggae music and its derivatives such as dancehall and ska (Marshall 1991). In the United States, skinheads have been co-opted by white supremacist groups and used as soldiers to carry out racist violence (O'Hara 1999). They frequently ruin shows with their violence (O'Hara 1999). Whether racist or not, skinheads are not punks; they are viewed by punks as conformists. It is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss the relationship between punks and skins, but the two have been intertwined since the beginning. Although, racism is universally denounced in all three waves of punk, skinheads continue to frequent punk gatherings. The existence of skinheads, however, gives an avenue for punks to express their beliefs on race by directly confronting the behavior and attitudes of skinheads. Songs like "Nazi Punks Fuck Off" (Dead Kennedys 1983) or "Kill the Nazis" (Total Chaos 1995) express how punks feel about skinheads and indirectly about racism.

Very few of the bands in the sample had members who were African American. Bad Brains were an all black band; Dead Kennedys' drummer was black and Fear's guitar player

was black. All of the other band members in the sample appear white. However, their interest in racial integration and equality remains strong:

> Who started all this bullshit--were they looking for a fight?
> You didn't have to be there to know that they were white
> But when you're talking skin tone, lets not fuck around
> Cause no one's really black or white, we're all just shades of brown.
> (MDC, "Shades of Brown" 1989)

While many minorities may find this lyric offensive, the singer is trying to resolve race issues by saying that racial differences are not biological. He also acknowledges that whites were the ones responsible for creating a racial hierarchy in which they are on top. Racial songs in the first wave almost always reflect relations between white and black Americans, but subsequent waves include other disadvantaged groups:

> Mexicans who cross the border
> Driven back by human mortar
> Foreign children covered with flies
> Why doesn't this country open its eyes
> (Total Chaos, "Racial Rupture" 1994)

Punks see racism as a national issue, perhaps global, that deserves government attention. They also see that the United States should play a role in assisting foreign countries and that our failure to do so is an indication of a racist mentality. In the third wave racism is also associated with religious prejudice:

> He's black, he's white, he's yellow, he's blue
> He is a Christian, He's a Buddhist, He's Islamic, He's a Jew
> Too often I hear people say stick with your own
> But I don't know what that means in this land we call home.
> (Cheap Sex, "False Pride" 2004)

The inclusion of other ethnic and religious minorities reflects the United States' current conflicts with the Middle East, its religious intolerance, and its influx of illegal immigrants.

While the frequency of race-themed songs declines in the second and third waves of punk, the sentiment remains. Punks insist that society needs to strive for equality in opportunity and peace among different ethnic groups.

Summary

The values and traditions of punk music have not changed dramatically in the last three decades. They are still angry and subversive and have not altered their political convictions much, with the noted exceptions of religion which is not as universally despised anymore. What has changed is the relative importance of each issue to punks. For the development of each theme throughout the course of the punk movement, see figures 2-6. They have taken on many causes, but they are all connected to the ideals of equality and autonomy. Although their political philosophy may not be sophisticated, they clearly think that issues of class, race, and sex oppression are connected with our capitalist economy. They seek to remedy these injustices through the personally empowering act of becoming a punk, which in essence means to reject all forms of authority and become individualistic. Their individualism however is compromised because they must conform to the expectations of the scene and explain themselves to members of the group.

Chapter V:
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The importance of collective identity in resistance movements is that any member of the group can speak for the entire group (McDonald 2004). Though punks are a group whose fundamental belief is in the autonomy of individuals, member praise the successful appropriation of the punk identity. Their avenue for social change is through the alteration of individuals. There is no doubt a loss of subjectivity in adopting a collective identity, so the rewards for belonging to a collective must be great. For punks the rewards are the recognition they receive from other members of their authenticity and conviction to punk ideals. They actively create this identity. Part of the formation of collective identity requires ritualistic behaviors and alternative belief structures (Roscigno, Danaher, and Summers-Effler 2002). The rituals of hairstyle and clothing as well as the lifestyle and participation in the scene at shows and through alternative businesses give punks a group identity, and the music is the way in which they develop their alternative belief structures. Music is able to unite the group across the country and, to a lesser degree, around the world.

Touraine (2004) has suggested that the term social movement is no longer adequate to describe resistance. Instead he suggests using "cultural movement" which implies a symbolic understanding of conflicts (722). By this definition punk is definitely a cultural movement. Punks symbolically resist using music to convey their struggle. They do not have chapters and formal meetings (other than shows) or organize around a single issue. Instead they reflect all of the conditions of contemporary society in a critical way. Punk plays a valuable role in challenging social norms and beliefs. It offers alternatives, albeit

sometimes impractical ones, to existing structures and questions everything. Whether or not the punk movement has issued any kind of real challenge depends on the amount of recognition it gets, which may account for the unconventional hairstyles and dress.

Resistance can be meaningless if no one knows about it. Recognition remains an important part of resistance (Hollander and Einwohner 2004). Movements who stage shocking events in hope of getting press coverage are well aware of the importance of recognition. Punks however do not often find themselves dealing with the larger society. They challenge the social order, yet they are confined within their own boundaries; some exceptions are riots, small scale protests, college radio programs and other college platforms. However, they practice "everyday acts of resistance" (Hollander and Einwohner 2004). These acts are more subtle, such as through song—although punk songs are hardly subtle. Punks reclaim symbolic power in this way, whether anyone recognizes it at all.

Contributions of the Study

This study fills a gap in the existing literature and links the ideals of the movement directly to the music. Therefore, it establishes the ideals of punk based on the words and ideas that punks convey to each other, not on those that are observed by researchers, or those that punks convey to non-punks through interviews. It also shows the continuity of ideals through the lifetime of the movement, which is unique feature of this study.

Limitations of the Study

A limitation to looking at music as the cultural product of the punk movement implies that there was a consensus by members to communicate to the public in this way. This may not be true. We do not know how many punks actually adhere to the values that are

discussed in the music. Many of them may be only partially committed, or not at all, to punk. Further, the influence of British punk on Americans is not examined. The two have an important connection, borrowing from each other in theme and style, but the social conditions of these two countries are very different. How, then, can American punk be a reflection or critique of society when it reflects the consciousness of a different country?

Future Study

The connection between the British punk movement and American punk could be further explored in the future. Another avenue for future research would be to examine how the ideals of punk manifest in an aging punk's life and how they continue or do not continue to resist. Since punks are raising children, and some of them raising grandchildren, do they pass their tradition of resistance to their offspring? This would be an interesting development in the punk scene. If the punk identity is one that is chosen, and particularly one that is anti-authoritarian, how would the children of punks fit into the punk movement since they may not choose to become a part of punk, but would be socialized to be?

Summary

Punks have shown themselves to be concerned with autonomy of all people, especially themselves. They are anti-authoritarian and anti-conformity, but many contradictions and inconsistencies appear in their political perspectives. The collective identity of punk is identifiable as one of continuous resistance to anything that is mainstream. This identity has not changed dramatically, which lends to the conclusion that it is more than a teenage rebellion and that members are committed to it.

Punk is still relevant as an object of study because punk culture continues to thrive,

despite its constantly changing population. A person's actual participation in the rituals of the punk scene is not as important as the maintenance and construction of the concept of punk. This and other future studies on punk will add to the understanding of social change and a person's capacity to change or resist the system. Movements such as punk that are loosely structured are difficult to define, but this endeavor is worthwhile because a movement so massive in size and enduring for three decades clearly has an influence on the larger society.

REFERENCES

Andes, Linda. 1998. "Growing up Punk: Meaning and Commitment Careers in A Contemporary Youth Subculture" Pp. 212-231 in *Youth Culture: Identity in a Postmodern World,* edited by Jonathon S. Epstein . Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Baron, Stephen W. 1989. "Resistance and Its Consequences: The Street Culture of Punks." *Youth and Society* 21.2:207-237.

Beckwith, Karen. 1998. "Collective Identities of Class and Gender: Working-Class Women in the Pittson Coal Strike." *Political Psychology* 19.1:147-167.

Berg, Bruce L. 2004. *Qualitative Research Methods For The Social Sciences* 5th ed. San Francisco: Pearson.

Bennet, Andy. 2006. "Punks Not Dead: The Continuing Significance of Punk Rock for an Older Generation of Fans." *Sociology* 40.2:219-235.

Blush, Steven. 2001. *American Hardcore: A Tribal History*. Los Angeles: Feral House.

Calhoun, Craig. "Pierre Bourdieu." Pp. 274-309 in *The Blackwell Companion to Major Contemporary Social Theorists*, edited by George Ritzer. Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Ciminelli, David and Ken Knox. 2005. *Homocore: The Loud and Raucous Rise of Queer Rock.* New York: Alyson Publications.

Davis, Joanna R. 2006. "Growing Up Punk: Negotiating Aging Identity in a Local Music Scene." *Symbolic Interaction* 29.1:63-70.

Eyerman, Ron and Andrew Jamison. 1998. *Music and Social Movements: Mobilizing Traditions in the Twentieth Century*. New York: Cambridge.

Fox, Kathryn Joan. 1987. "Real Punks and Pretenders: The Social Organization of a Counterculture." *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 16.3:344-370.

Glasper, Ian. 2006. *The Day the Country Died: A History of Anarcho Punk 1980-1984.* London: Cherry Red Books.

Grossman, Perry. 1996. "Identity Crisis: The Dialectics of Rock, Punk, and Grunge." *Berkeley Journal of Sociology* 41:19-39.

Haenfler, Ross 2004. "Collective Identity In the Straight Edge Movement: How Diffuse Movements Foster Commitment, Encourage Individualized Participation, and Promote Cultural Change." *The Sociological Quarterly* 45.4:785-805.

Hebdige, Dick. 1979. *Subculture: The Meaning of Style.* New York: Routledge.

Hollander, Jocelyn A. and Rachel L. Einwohner. 2004. "Conceptualizing Resistance." *Sociological Forum* 19.4:533-554.

Hurchalla, George. 2006. *Going Underground: American Punk 1979-1992.* Stuart, Fl: Zuo Press.

Johnston, Hank, Enrique Laraña and Joseph R. Gusfield. 1994. "Identities, Grievances, and New Social Movements." Pp. 1-35 in *New Social Movements: From Ideology to Identity.* Philadelphia: Temple UP.

Keithley, Joey. 2003. *I, Shithead: A Life in Punk.* Vancouver, BC: Arsenal Pulp.

Leblanc, Lauraine. 2002. *Pretty In Punk: Girls' Gender Resistance In A Boy's Subculture.* Piscataway, NJ: Rutgers UP.

McDonald, Kevin. 2004. "Oneself as Another: From Social Movement to Experience Movement." *Current Sociology* 52:575-593.

McNeil, Legs and Gillian McCain. 1996. *Please Kill Me: The Uncensored Oral History of Punk.* London: Penguin Books.

Marshall, George. 1991. *Spirit of '69: A Skinhead Bible.* Dunoon, Scotland: ST Publishing.

Moore, Ryan. 2005. "Alternative to What? Subcultural Capital and the Commercialization of a Music Scene." *Deviant Behavior* 26:229-252.

O'Connor, Alan. 2004. "The Sociology of Youth Subcultures." *Peace Review* 16.4:409-414.

O'Hara, Craig. 1999. *The Philosophy of Punk: More than Noise*, 2nd ed. San Francisco: AK Press.

Pilkington, Hilary and Richard Johnson. 2003. "Peripheral Youth: Relations of Identity and Power in Global/Local Context." *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 6.3:259-283.

Ranaghan, Christine and Jeffrey R. Breese. 2004. "Punks and Crusties: An Exploration of the Squatter Community." *Sociological Imagination* 40.1:31-53.

Roscigno, Vincent J, William F. Danher, and Erika Summers-Effler. 2002. "Music, Culture, and Social Movements: Song and Southern Textile Worker Mobilization, 1929-1934." *The International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy* 22:141-174.

Silverman, David. 2001. *Interpreting Qualitative Data: Methods for Analyzing Talk, Text and Interaction*, 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Traber, Daniel S. 2001. "L.A.'S 'White Minority': Punks and the Contradictions of Self-Marginalization." *Cultural Critique* 48:31-64.

Touraine, Alain. 2004. "On the Frontier of Social Movements." *Current Sociology* 52:717-727.

Williams, J. Patrick. 2006. "Authentic Identities: Straightedge Subculture, Music and The Internet." *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 35.2:173-200

Wojcik, Daniel. 1995. *Punk and Neo-Tribal Body Art.* Singapore: UP of Mississippi.

Appendix A:
Tables and Figures

Frequency Distribution Tables of Themes Found in Punk Lyrics in Sample

Themes	First Wave 1978-1989 N=275		Second Wave 1990-1999 N=288		Third Wave 2000-2007 N=115	
	%	n	%	n	%	n
Table 1: Authority and Politics						
Government and Police	28.0	77	24.6	68	25.2	29
Anarchy	0.0	0	1.8	5	3.5	4
War	3.6	10	5.6	16	14.8	17
Terrorism	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.9	1
Ecology	3.6	10	2.1	6	7.8	9
Religion	11.3	31	6.9	20	9.6	11
Corporations	8.0	22	7.6	22	6.0	7
Table 2: Inequality						
Class	22.2	61	8.7	25	7.8	9
Gender	12.4	34	5.9	17	5.2	6
Homosexuality	2.5	7	1.0	3	3.5	4
Race	6.9	19	5.2	15	3.5	4
Table 3: Lifestyle						
Conformity	25.8	71	28.1	81	40.0	46
Consumption	0.0	0	2.1	6	2.7	3
Drugs	12.0	33	11.5	33	18.3	21
Straight-edge	2.2	6	0.7	2	0.0	0
Scene	13.5	37	20.1	58	28.6	33
Nostalgia	0.0	0	8.7	25	7.8	9
Table 4: Personal						
Relationships	1.0	3	23.3	67	10.4	12
Isolation	1.5	4	2.4	7	5.2	6
Mental Illness	4.7	13	4.9	14	5.2	6
Suicide	0.7	2	5.6	16	0	0
Table 5: Action						
Change Advocated	13.5	37	13.2	38	10.4	12
Violence	6.6	18	15.6	45	18.3	21
Non Violence	4.0	11	0.3	1	0.9	1

**All songs had multiple themes; total does not equal 100%

Figure 1
Comparison of Waves

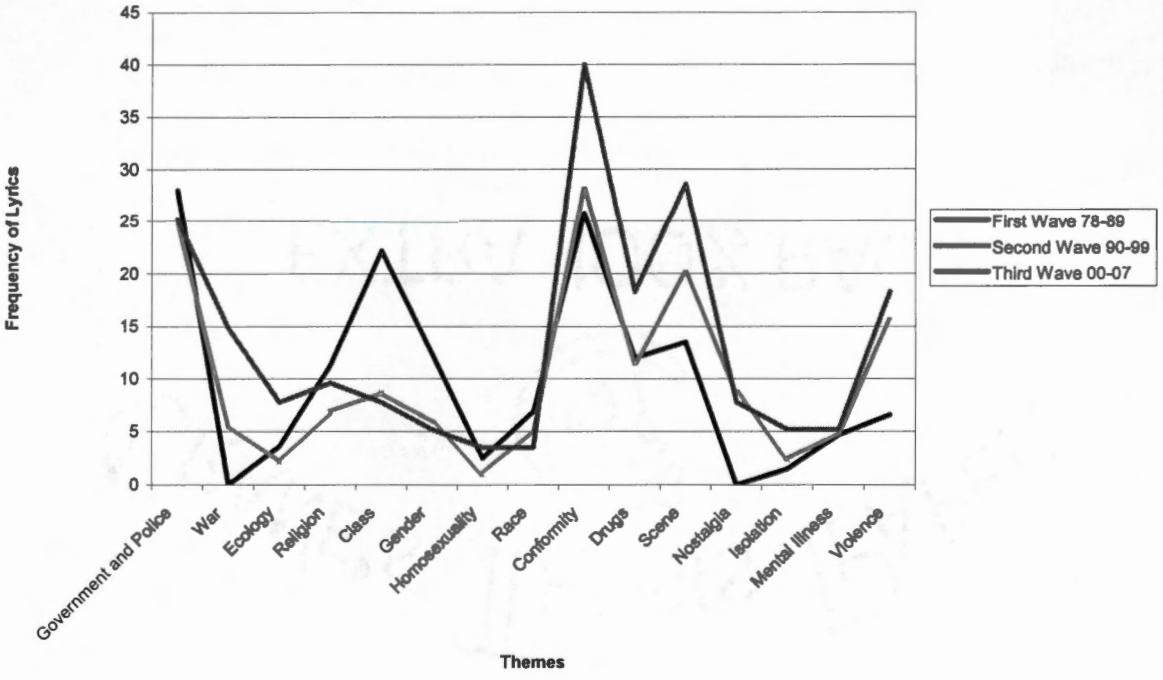


Figure 2
Authority and Politcs over Lifespan of Punk
1978-2007

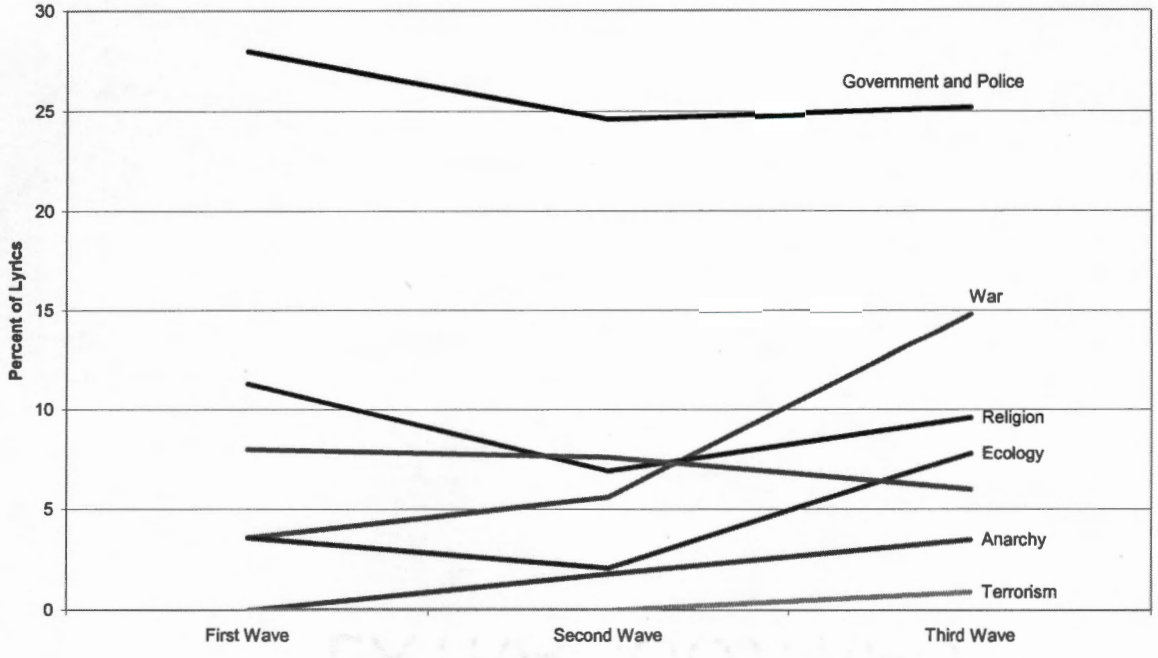


Figure 3
Inequality Themes Over Lifespan of Punk
1978-2007

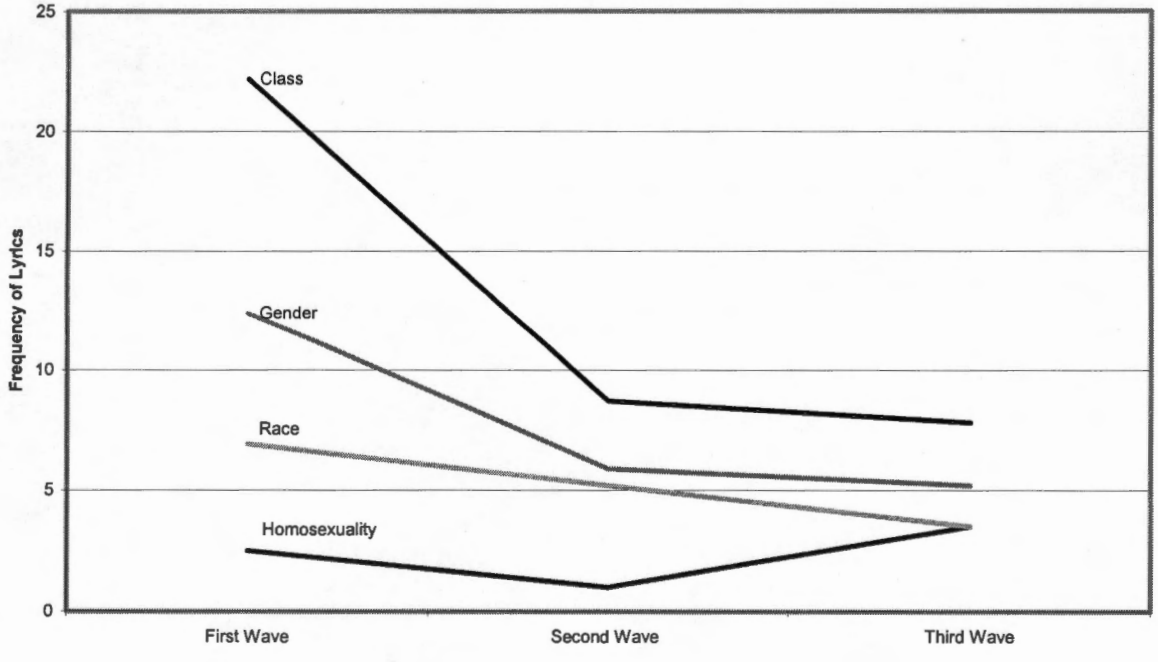


Figure 4
Lifestyle Themes over Lifespan of Punk
1978-2007

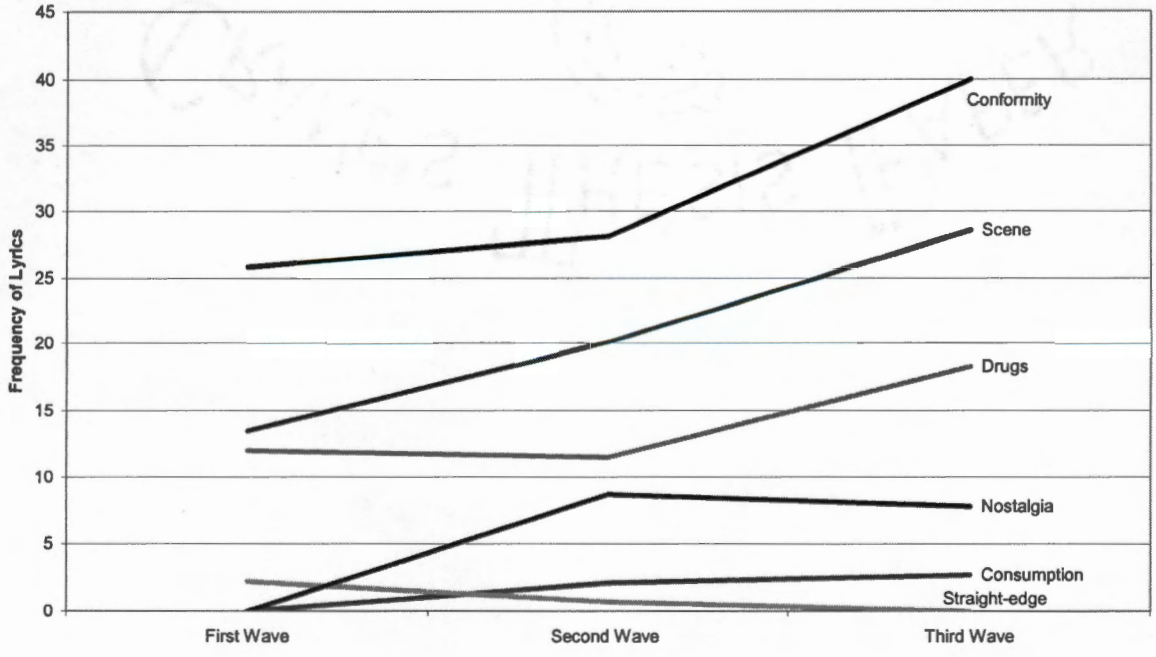


Figure 5
Personal Themes over Lifespan of Punk
1978-2007

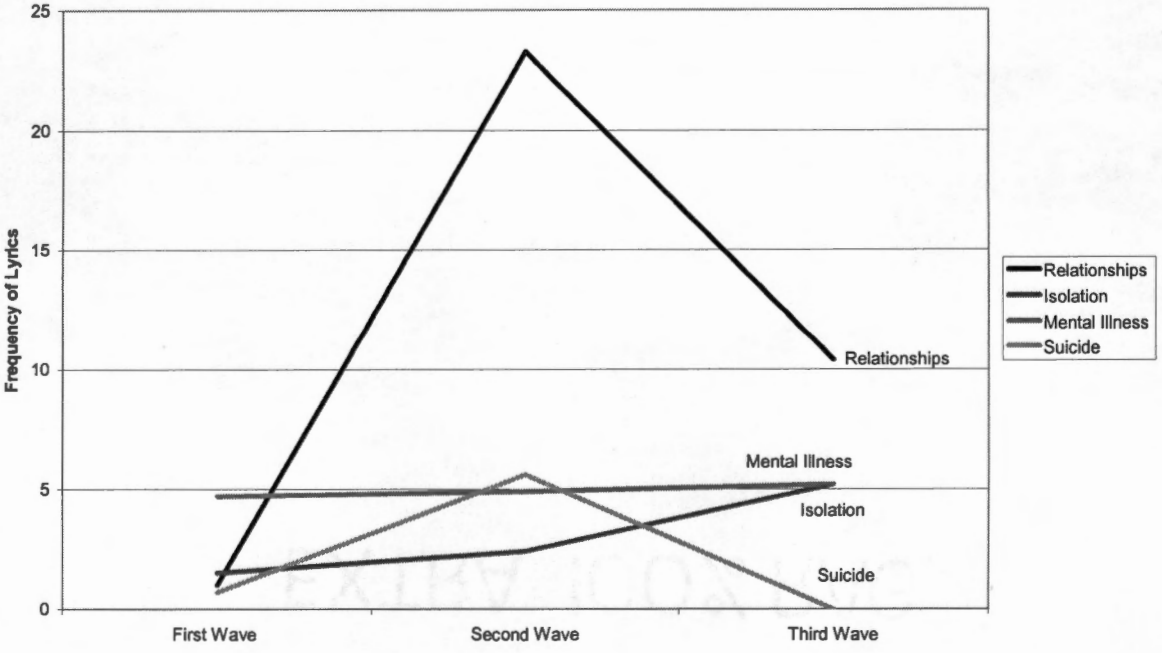
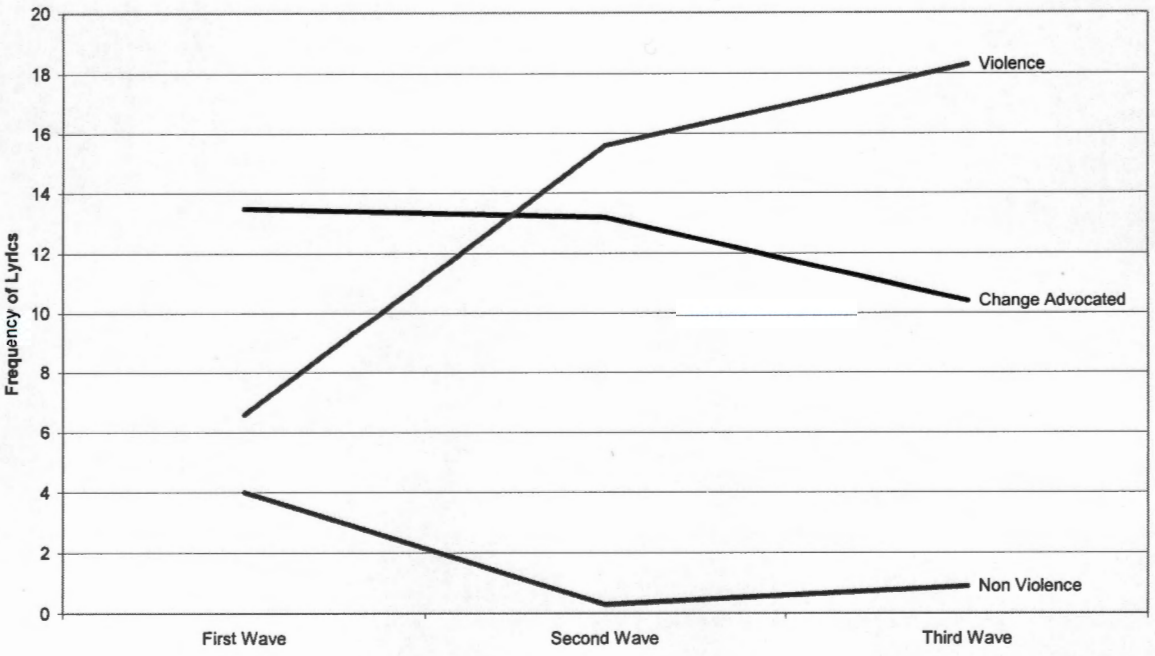


Figure 6
Action Themes over Lifespan of Punk
1978-2007



Appendix B:
Songs Used in Analysis

FIRST WAVE 1978-2007

7 Seconds

Here's Your Warning
Definite Choice
Not Just Boys' Fun
This Is The Angry
Straight On
You Lose!
What If There's War In America?
The Crew
Clenched Fists, Black Eyes
Colorblind
Aim To Please
Boss
Young 'Til I Die
Red And Black
Diehard
I Have A Dream
Bully
Trust
In Your Face
Spread
Walk Together, Rock Together
Strength
The Night Away
New Wind
Somebody Help Me Scream
Tied Up In Rhythm
Man Enough To Care
Opinion Of Feelings
Expect To Change
Still Believe
The Inside

Bad Brains

Pay To Cum
Fearless Vampire Killers (F.V.K.)
I Luv Jah
Right Brigade
Big Takeover

How Low Can a Punk Get?
Banned in D.C.
I and I Survive
We Will Not
Coptic Times
Rally Round Jah Throne
Attitude
Riot Squad
Sailin On
Rock For Light
Destroy Bablyon
Joshua's Song
The Meek
At the Movies
Leaving Babylon
The Regulator
Supertouch/Shitfit
Don't Need It

Battalion of Saints

Animal In Man
Beefmasters
Buddies and Pals
Cops Are Out
Doomed World
E/B
Fair Warning
Fighting Boys
Holy Vision
I Wanna Make You Scream
Intercourse
Modern Day Heroes
My Mind's Diseased
No More Lies
No Time
Right Or Wrong
Second Coming
Solitary Is Fun
Too Much Fun

Black Flag

No More
My War
Gimme Gimme Gimme
Six Pack

Spray Paint (The Walls)
What I See
Life of Pain
TV Party
Depression
Room 13
Rise Above
Damaged II
Can't Decide
Nervous Breakdown
Padded Cell
Thirsty and Miserable
Police Story

Dag Nasty

Under Your Influence
Circles
Thin Line
Values Here
Justification
What Now?
Staring At The Rude Boys
I've Heard
Can I Say
Never Go Back

Dead Kennedys

Where Do Ya Draw The Line
Potshot Heard 'Round the World
D.M.S.O
Lie Detector
At My Job
Stars and Stripes of Corruption
Moon Over Marin
Religious Vomit
Moral Majority
Hyperactive Child
Soup is Good Food
Hellnation
This Could Be Anywhere/ (This Could Be Everywhere)
A Growing Boy Needs His Lunch
Chicken Farm
The Prey
Night of The Living Rednecks
Advice From Christmas Past

Government Flu
Terminal Preppie
Kepone Factory
Dog Bite
Nazi Punks Fuck Off
We've Got A Bigger Problem Now
Take This Job and Shove It
Hop With The Jet Set
Dear Abby
One Way Ticket to Pluto
Do The Slag
Gone With My Wind
Police Truck
Too Drunk to Fuck
California Über Alles
Shrink
Triumph Of The Swill
Macho Insecurity
I Spy
Cesspools in Eden
Jock-O-Rama (Invasion of The Beef Patrol)
Goons of Hazzard
M.T.V. Get off the Air
Trust Your Mechanic
Well Paid Scientist
Kill The Poor
Forward To Death
When Ya Get Drafted
Let's Lynch The Landlord
Drug Me
Your Emotions
Chemical Warfare
I Kill Children
Stealing People's Mail
Funland at the Beach
Ill In The Head
Man With the Dogs
N-Sight
Life Sentence
Holiday in Cambodia
A Child and His Lawnmower
Saturday Night Holocaust
Forest Fire

Halloween
Winnebago Warrior
Riot
Pull My Strings
Straight A's
Kinky Sex Makes The World Go 'Round
Bleed For Me
I Am The Owl
Dead End
Anarchy For Sale
Chickenshit Conformist
Rambozo The Clown
Fleshdunce
The Great Wall

Dwarves

Sometimes Gay Guys Don't Wear Pink
Mind Expanders
College Town
Love Gestapo

Fear

Beef Balogna
We Got to Get Outta This Place
Fresh Flesh
Drink Some Beer
Waiting For the Meat
Null Detector
Welcome to The Dust Ward
Bomb The Russians
Have A Beer With Fear
I Am A Doctor
More Beer
Responsibility
Fuck Christmas
No More Nothing
Getting the Brush
Disconnected
I Love Livin' In The City
We Destroy The Family
Foreign Policy
Gimme Some Action
New York's Alright If You Like Saxophones
I Don't Care About You
Let's Have A War

MDC

I Remember
Massacred and Dismembered Culture
Lets Kill all the Cops
Police Related Death
Dead Cops/America's So Straight
Born to Die
Business on Parade
Violent Redneck
John Wayne Was a Nazi
I Hate Work
My Family is a Little Weird
Greedy and Pathetic
Church and State
Kill the Light
American Achievements
Millions of Damn Christians
Who's the Terrorist Now
Sexy and Christian
Bye Bye Ronnie
Chock Full of Shit
Mao Tse Tung
S.K.I.N.H.E.A.D.
Hail Satan
Thanks For Giving Me What I Didn't Want
Your Death Wish is Sick
Founding Fathers
Going Nowhere Faster You
Destroying the Planet
Long Time Gone
Welfare Line
Sleep A Little Less, Dream A Little More
Time Out
Life, But How to Live It
Shades of Brown
Girls Like You Make Me Queer
This Blood's For You
Prime Evil
Prick Faced Bastard
Sick of It
Nazis Shouldn't Drive
No More Cops
Walking on Thin Ice

Long Day, Short Life

Teen Idles

Fiorucci Nightmare
Commie Song
Minor Disturbance
Getting in My Way
Fleeting Fury
Deadhead
Get Up and Go
Sneakers
Teen Idles

Youth Brigade

Sink With Kalifornjia
Modest Proposal
Men In Blue
Sound And Fury
Fight To Unite
Jump Back
Blown Away
Live Life
What Are You Fighting For
Did You Wanna Die
You Don't Understand
The Circle
Duke Of Earl
What Will The Revolution Change
What Price Happiness?
Where Are We Going?
Who Can You Believe In?
On The Edge
Look In The Mirror
Care
Violence

SECOND WAVE 1990-1999

88 Fingers Louie

Pent Up
Explanation
Outright Lies
Had My Chance
Smart Enough To Run

Holding Back
My Little World
Blink
I've Won
Something I Don't Know
Family Resemblance
I Hate Myself
I Don't Wanna Hear It
Tomorrow Starts Today
Selfish Means
State
Summer Photos
Two-Faced Bastard
Another Love Song
Joyboy
Newspaper
Drunk And Ugly
Worst Man Won
Punk Rock Rulebook
Elmer's
Well Done
100 Proof
All My Friends Are In Popular Bands
Admission
New Direction
Night of The Living Dead
Not Just My Head

98 Mute

Wrong
All Cops Are Bastards
Dreams
Another Boring Day
Painkiller
Answers
Them
Better Days Ahead
Ground Zero
Young Americans
Beauty Queen
Don't
Fair Game
Last Laugh
Ask Yourself

How Do You Feel Now?
Election Year
Breakdown
Shine
Great Expectations
Hangman
Growing Old
Perfect Sense
Slander
Short Fuse
Open Your Eyes
Picture This
Watch Over Me

Against All Authority

Lifestyle Of Rebellion
No Reason
Conditioning
Freedom
Destroy What Destroys You
Another Fuck You Song
30 Second Song
Kickin The Dog
Sounds of The Underground
Walking Revolution
Disobey
Chelsea Baby
The Corporate Takeover
Hard As Fuck
Centerfold
We Won't Submit
Above the Law
Under Your Authority
Court 22
All Fall Down
12:00 AM
Justification
Keep Trying
At Our Expense
Stand In Line
Toby
We Don't Need You
The Mayhem and The Pain
Louder Than Words

What The Fuck'd You Expect?
Daddy's Little Girl
SK8 Rock
Watered Down and Passive
When The Rain Begins to Fall
The Bottle's Lookin' Better
WWYD?
I Want to Stab You With Something Rusty
Wet Foot Policy

Blanks 77

Party Train
Chelsea Girls
Punks And Skins
Search and Destroy
Get Out Alive
Jahovahs Witness
Next Generation
Final Solution
Bastards
She's Gone
Let's Riot
Police Attack
We're The Ones
Spirit of '77
Sick
Tensions
We Don't Need You
Just Another #
Automatic
Do Or Die
Are We Having Fun Yet?
Losing My Brain
Void
No One Cares
Dog
Watch You Drown
Burn It Down
I Don't Wanna Be
Suburbia
I Wanna Be A Punk
Hit and Run
Up The System
Gimme Speed

Drag
Static
Crash and Burn

Blood For Blood

Enter the Criminal Mind
Die Laughing
Wasted Youth Crew (My Kind Belong Nowhere)
All Fucked Up
Evil In The Brain
Revenge On Society
'Ya Still a Paper Gangster
I Am the Enemy
My Time Is Yet To Come
Shut My Eyes Forever
Last Call…Fuck You
No Tomorrow
Cheap Wine
Eulogy For A Dream
Anywhere But Here (Maybe Someday)
Nothing For You
Livin' In Exile
Still Fucked Up
Piss All Over Your Hopes and Dreams
Maldito
Can't Heal
Soulless
Fade
Spit My Last Breath
Jaded
Waiting For The Moment
Redemption Denied
Hurt You
Chaos (In Your Face)
The Strain

Boy Sets Fire

Pure
Cringe
Fine Art Of Falling
Another Badge Of Courage
Swingset
The Power Remains The Same
In Hope
Toy Gun Anthem

Cadence
65 Factory Outlets
Hometown Report Card
Voiceover
The Tyranny Of What Everyone Knows
Loser Of the Year Award
Cavity

Choking Victim

Choking Victim
You Ought To Die
Apple Pie and Police State
Infested
Death Song
Born To Die
Suicide (A Better Way)
500 Channels
In Hell
Crack Rock Steady
Fucked Reality
Hate Yer State
Fuck America
War Story
Five-Finger Discount
Praise To The Sinners
Living The Laws
Corporate Trash
Money Changes Everything

Good Clean Fun

Shopping For A Crew
Positively Positive
Good Clean Fun
My Best Friends
Who Shares Wins
Coll-edge
A Song For The Ladies
Hang Up and Drive
Sweet Tooth
The Vegan Revolution Draft Dodger Anthem

Naked Aggression

Mind Control
Religious Lies
Killing Floor
Bitter Youth

Smash the State
Silent War
Us Against Them
Comfortably Dumb
Out Of Control
Breaking Away
You're Nightmare, My Life
Revolution On the Way
Fed Up
Road To Ruin
Life On The Road
They Can't Get Me Down
Why Do They Fuck Up My World
Break The Walls
Angry
Censored Truth
Media
Right Now
Revolt
Walkin' Around
Ode To A Fucked Up World
Violence
Death To All The Pigs
Hardcore Guy
Leave Me Alone
Time Bomb
Lies
Plastic World
Under 18
March March Along
Lock Us Away
In the Night
Don't Waste My Time
Anthem

The Pist

Warning

Total Chaos

Babylon
What's Left For Us?
Fuck The System
Lives are Squandered
Gomer Pyle
Nightmares

Twisted Cross
Riot City
Racial Rupture
Pledge Of Defiance
Suicide Mission
Initial Distrust
Punk No Die
Proposition Of Change
End Of White Supremacy
My Generation
Unite To Fight
Vacation To Violation
Kill The Nazis
Patriotic Song
Squatter's Song
Non Conformist
Freedom Denied
Direction From Rage
Why?
Voice Of The Streets
Back To Our Roots
Complete Control
Boot Party
Riot 77
Be What You Want
Not Anymore
Born To Lose
Crowd Control
Johnny
Lost Boy
Punk Invasion
D.U.I
Sex And Violence
Tomorrow
Murdered

THIRD WAVE 2000-2007

Against Me!

Same Old Song
The Price Of Freedom
Does It Make A Difference?
Disgust

In The Name OF What?
Tearing Down The Walls
Burning Bridges
Shit Stroll (Nah Nah Nah)
Eden Quest
This Is Control
National Myth
Once Pure
I Am Citizen
Mutiny On The Electronic Bay
Rock n' Roll Bullshit
I Still Love You Julie
Un-thought Of Heroes
Haste Killed Creativity
Cliché Guevara

Cheap sex

Launch Off To War
Consume and Consume
Take A Chance
Smash Your Symbols
Eyes See All
Dead Today
If Society
Dick Cheney
It's Up To You
Living In Fear
Out On Your Own
Backstabber
False Pride
Desperation
Lucky To Be Alive
Reality TV
Water Runs Dry
Worst Nightmare
Headed For A Breakdown
White Sheep
Raped By The FCC
Child Molester
Walking Disease
Boy In A Bubble
Fuck Emo
Worst Enemy
War's No Game

Excuses
Psychopath
No Time For You
Rage and Revenge
Written In Blood
Fear In The Night
Russian Roulette
Secret Agenda
Youth Offender
Nothing To Gain
Paranoia
Manslaughter
Death Is The Law
Feel No Regret
Hatred
Hot Topic
I'm Sick

Limp Wrist

I Love Hardcore Boys
The Ode
Just Like You
Fake Fags Fuck Off

Pistol Grip

Crucifixion Politix
Runnin From The Gun
Aristocratic State
Adrenaline
Claustrophobia
Bourgeoisie
Get Up To Get Shot Down
P.O.W.
Fuck The P.M.R.C.
The Scoundrels
Missionary
Righteous Vigilante
L.A. City Jinx
Sweet and Sour Of A Knife
Empty Shells
The Unwanted Children
Black Heart
1997
A Murder Of Crows
Marshburn Ave

Gypsy
Broken Radio
From The Arches To The End
The Damned OF Tomorrow
Another Face To Hate
The Rebels Are Dead
When The Ink Runs Dry

Terror

All I've Got
Another Face
Are We Alive
Better Off Without You
Crushed By The Truth
Don't Need Your Help
Enemies In Sight
Find My Way
Keep Your Distance
Keep Your Mouth Shut
Less Than Zero
Life And Death
Lowest Of the Low
No One Cares
Not This Time
Nothing To Me
One With The Underdogs
Overcome
Push It Away
Spit My Rage
What Have We Done